

## STUART FRIEBERT

### *Growing Together*

Having a baby is of course not an illness.  
It falls to the street during an earthquake.

The vane in the shape of a man holding his thumb  
to his nose is suited to the snows of the north.

The way birds suddenly stop feeding and sit  
in nearby shrubs, preening. The way thorns don't

keep rabbits from eating the bark. Snow can break  
limbs of trees, form huge drifts and so on and on.

By checking the snowflakes in the storm more than  
once, you might say life is breathing. Circulating

blood, eating food, and making haste. That's true enough.  
If the horse had given birth to the calf, the rose produced

lilies: we must be in liquid to live. But the wind keeps  
blowing and insects still drink honey. If every egg a cod

fish laid became a baby fish the ocean would soon pack solid.  
Maybe you've heard that people are mammals, have backbones,

nurse young. Pollen grains and plant eggs meeting by chance.  
When you're older, there'll be enough room to hold a baby

on your lap, space enough to pass it out when it's ready.  
Once the egg's inside, fine waving hairs push it along.

Soon all the bones grow together, the skull feels as solid  
as yours.