

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

*Edited & Introduced by Wesley McNair,
Maine Poet Laureate*

Annie Farnsworth of Arundel contributed this week's poem about life with a five-year-old son. The poem was inspired, she writes, by the amazement of realizing her child "was a gift that allowed me to see and move through the world in a way completely different from what I'd previously known."

Spaghetti Western Days

(for Jacob)

by Annie Farnsworth

My son, just turned five
has not learned the rules about wild versus tame.
Always busy, transplanting field violets
and dandelions into my garden to make it
"more beautiful," smuggling toads
and millipedes into the house to keep for pets.
I mourn those small lives whose tiny,
desiccated remains I must chip from the windowsills,
shake from shoeboxes, and I try to explain
why we must leave nature where it is.

But this is a boy who snitches
my scotch tape and writing paper
to roll his own "cigarettes," who knows
that the good guys wear white hats
but he wants a black one anyway. A boy
with holsters and spurs, no horse in sight.
Days like this, when both front and back doors
flap like wings, and the big pine out back
flies a banner of kite tail,
I see that my doorstep is no boundary
and that there are frontiers I haven't yet
got eyes to see. And if I know anything,
just one damn thing worth knowing
in this lifetime I've learned it only since
this whirlwind of a boy
blew into town.

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