

POETRY

Blessing My Son

Matt Nagel

Now that you are named
and heretofore known
and promised missions and maidens
and temples and talents

and white shirts and quorum duties
and a car full of car seats—
I whisper to you now
what I really hope for:
safe
healthy
kind

And if you discover sex before you're supposed to
may it be good sex and safe sex
(for her sake at least)
And if you discover beer and weed and
the f-word
may you use them safely, too,
and kindly

And if Joseph's lightning strikes in you no dry kindling
let it strike instead a damp, indifferent sponge,
no big deal, merely academic,
never a burr or a thorn—

And if you really fly off the deep end
I will remember that
I am bound to my neighbors by beautiful covenants
and appointments on the damn Cub Scout calendar
but our bond is blood
and name
and ten million minutes together
chasing you chasing me
just to be with you
I don't care where
just to be with you
I will follow you if you don't
follow me