

spacecraftprojects

we are all astronauts

transmissions
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Four poems for St. Thomas the Apostle Nursery School

1.

The years through which we banked two children
in your peopled safety: boots off, doors, the keypad lock. This

daily cartography

of free-range preschoolers. Heartbeats, settling slowly
into classrooms. Hello, sunrise. Mornings we arrive,

dream-selves, immersed

in weather. Layers of water, snow or soil, sun
drenched *in perpetua*. A displacement: unplowed paths

of shadows, liquid. Snowsuits, coats and hats, one hundred
mismatched mittens, shoes. How

do you manage? I follow, lag. Our girl ascends, from point
to rhythmic point.

2.

I gather schoolbags, thoughts; my keys. Today
they ask about the rain. Today they ask if they

can climb aboard these bordered plinths
of plowed snow. Today they ask

about my mother, dead these ten long years. How
did she die? Will you die too? I wonder. Mornings,

repeatedly, dispatch. They echo. I routine, best: same

as it ever was. A stretch of northbound traffic, daily pass

by teens en route to Ridgemont, south, as we

trudge north. Familiarity, breeds. Some greetings. Bobble
nod of heads, respond, respond.

3.

Full fathomed. To our two young ladies: your father lies
exhausted. Choral, through this fair

and inevitable sea-change. Worn coats cling, begin
to wear. Our two girls, summers green

and endless. Layered. Before they drift away, free agents.
Pulsed, re-packaged. Grade school,

Junior high, beyond. A stitch, in time, these blocks

of weeping buildings. I could be
long dead.

4.

Beyond the transparency

of unbaked walls, a cavalcade

of children's art. Her teacher distinguishes
brushwork, hand prints. Knots on the page. Here,

this is hers. This painted aggregate, a snowman; assemblage
of purple swirling green. This too. Each ardent splash

of rainbow glue, of glitter. Fingers splayed, outlined,
repurposed; construction paper carved

and coloured. Heartfelt. Safety scissors. Their daily bags
an archive trail of composition. They fill the house

with paper, laughter, songs. Complaining.