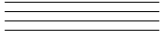


# THE SHOW OPENS TOMORROW



D E B O R A H G A R R I S O N

Why now but I miss my childhood.

Miss the free radical self  
who idled over a blade  
of grass or belted a show tune  
upside down, trim and tall  
in a handstand

I could hold long, long. . .

The grace of living  
palms to floor, married  
to the single moment,  
the joy uncatalogued.

Tonight my daughter came  
singing from her dress rehearsal,  
cheeks rosy and hair unwinding from a do,  
lips and eyes still stained;  
she reviewed the glorious flaws,  
the company notes, the heart-stomping  
boys with men's voices.

Her face scrubbed and cradled in pillow,  
herself tucked and attended by her kingdom's trinkets,  
books, once-favored animals, diaries,  
she tossed up an arm  
and laughed, half begged:  
"It won't ever be this much fun again,  
will it?"