

Sonnet Scroll

Cousins

By Jennifer Davis Michael

My son and nephew walk away from me,
not in step but mirroring each other,
cotton shirts draped in a lopsided V.
Nine years apart, they could be brothers.
The older curves his body toward the toddler,
who aims himself intently at the barn
and field beyond the pavement, babbling hunger
for novelty, without a fear of harm.

I recognize the tilt of my son's head,
the gaze of experience, solicitous
to let his cousin search at his own pace.
It's not clear who is leading or is led,
their shadows longer than their memories
and briefer than my hopes for their embrace.