

Poetry & Education

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Summer Escape

Children, their hands upon desks.
Palms down, flat, knuckles ready for rapping.

Teacher takes out her pointer and her hairpins.
The clock has already struck *summer* but the long lines
of cursive have yet to surrender.

We are not of this time, says the girl in the front row.
The children gasp. Teacher insists upon silence.
A few pads twitch.

If I brought you my life you'd know what time it is,
Teacher replies, produces an apple, twirls
and throws it up like a coin.

I dare you, says the boy, the one with the multiplication tables
hidden on the inside of his elbows, planet roll call
underneath his five-ring binder.

Yes, comes the answer. *Yes, you do*.
And out of the wardrobe springs an old woman, a mattress,
a ticket stub, and a fence.

The children begin building. The boy and the girl
rush down to the gymnasium,
Teacher steps behind them.

They play with her life until the janitors turn out the lights.