

A BOY'S HANDS

It was with those hands that he stroked Hedwig,
sometimes absent-mindedly,
having swiped frantically
at a fountain of airborne letters,
clutched a train ticket to a new life
his holly and phoenix feather wand
never far from those fingers.
And those hands hung
from a shaking, bewitched broomstick
only to proudly hold up his first snitch
to a riotously cheering crowd.

He laid those hands flat
against a magic mirror
hoping to fall through the glass
and reach his family, hands
that pulled a blood-red stone from his pocket,
pressed a painful forehead scar.

Even his young hands were those
that burned Quirrell,
vanquished Voldemort.

The caring hands
that protected Dobby from himself
opened and thumbed through an empty diary
before making their own ink offering.

And those the brave hands
that killed a monster with the sword of Gryffindor
took up the basilisk fang
to spear the horcrux pages.

Those neglected, vigorous hands
clutched a Hogsmeade permission form,
held a grim teacup,
let go of a flying hippogriff's neck.

How many times did his hands
open and close the Marauder's Map?
Write to Padfoot?
Raise his wand to cast his father's patronus?

Amazing to think of such hands, teenaged,

gripping the perilous connecting thread between two wands
refusing to let go of Cedric
and, a quieter time, humbly stroking Fawkes
or tenderly replacing the fallen
framed picture of his parents.

Remember in your mind the hands
bleeding with Umbridge's torture,
gripping Neville's arm in congratulations
for his first, hard-won stunning spell,
being pulled roughly down a spiral staircase,
holding high a glass prophesy,
carrying low a worn potions textbook.

The hands that found and administered the bezoar
to save a friend's life
also cast the slicing spell
that bled an enemy classmate,
but would later pull that enemy
out of fire, save him from death.
One hand steadied Slughorn's
as the professor, shaking,
transferred his memory into a tiny flask;
the other's light touch caused Morvolo's horcrux-ring
to spin wildly on Dumbledore's desk.

These hands were put upon.
Forced to tip potion into a beloved
headmaster's tortured mouth.
Hexed to be still while this mentor
fell under attack.

But they felt the smooth, soft salve
of the invisibility cloak
sliding through their fingers
the cloth supple as water, light as air.
They never sought or clung to power,
but buried Moody's eye.

Even these hands, that wrested
three wands from the hands of Draco
and thereby cast a triple spell,
even these that craved the Elder Wand
buried their savior *properly: without magic.*
These hands dug *with a kind of fury,*
relishing the non-magic of it,

every blister Harry's offering to the elf.
These very hands turned over the stone
three times, and brought back the dead.
Then let the stone go.

These hands, legendary, persevered
with the unerring skill of the seeker
stopped the last killing curse
and caught the Elder Wand, but chose
to mend the holly wand

and let the Deathstick go.