

THE SPOON RIVER Poetry Review

David Bond

At the Wellness Center

"...deformities in cerebral palsy are rarely symmetrical. There is often a tendency to a windswept posture..."

—Journal of Reconstructive Surgery

Which wind answers
for the cant of small bones,

this child's body set biaswise
into an aluminum cart

she calls home? Who stares
upward at a ceiling fly or

whatever deity hovers there,
frail geometry of zigzags

and the negative space flesh
still claims for its own,

arms forever raised shoulder-high,
arched as if showing off imagined

biceps, ready for some sort
of violent exercise. We know

no better passage: the bent fingers
of a young girl and a leaky murmur

from this irresponsible sump of heart.

“That’s my little angel,”

her mother says, and yes, I can
see that, too, in eyes that look beyond us,

a complicated, imponderable music,
those pinioned arms lifting

perhaps in a gradual ascension or
in praise for the inherent harmony

of nature. Sure, I suppose it’s
possible the poisonous downslope

winds a famous poet writes about
are to blame, or the gusts that snap

the willow bines like whips. Maybe
it’s just another of nature’s pranks

within the white funnel, the williwaw
of wind that carries a jar of pickles

for miles, unbroken, dumps the baby
grand into the middle of a Nebraska

cornfield. Or maybe a more subtle
gesture, gently shifting things

to counter-vision, to a spare diversity
striking as beauty.