

## The Wonder Years

Miraculous engines of salt and light,  
each one a wonder of God's own might.  
What makes them gurgle and coo and such?  
Why do we love them so very much?  
How are they different at two and three...  
developing each personality,  
becoming each lovable mini-me,  
exploring each special identity,  
expanding the bond of community.

Who will embrace the music and arts?  
Who will outnumber the sum of their parts?  
Who will jump higher, run faster, be stronger?  
Who will exhibit tenacity longer?  
How is the village in charge of this,  
treating each one as a precious gift,  
seeing each smile as a source of bliss,  
raising each one as a hope to lift?

What do the experts tell us to do...  
beyond the red, the yellow and blue,  
beyond the tying of each foot's shoe,  
beyond the addition of two plus two?  
If we train up the child in the way  
it should go,  
will their yes be yes...  
and their no be no?  
Will faith always show us

the high and the low?  
Will prayer always harvest  
the seeds that we sow?

How do we mold the environment?  
How do we fashion the biggest tent?  
How do we nurture what heaven sent?  
Who gets to own and who must rent?  
What will our vigilance serve to prevent?  
What did we buy, with each dollar we spent?  
How did we get it so twisted and bent?  
That's not how we planned it...  
That's not what we meant.

Miraculous engines of blood and brine...  
each one a wonder of nature's design.  
What of their race, their gender and being?  
Who's to determine what they are seeing?  
The father, the mother, the sister, the brother,  
what if we stop and don't have another?  
If we only bear one, will that be enough?  
Who do we go to, to teach us this stuff?

We wonder about every child we create.  
Is the world that they enter too filled with hate?  
What will they do with the stuff on their plate?  
Do we close the door and lock the gate?  
What of their destiny? What is their fate,  
for all the things we should make great?  
Will the problem's solutions arrive too late,  
for all of the storms and all of the weight

of the planet's expiration date?  
Are they the catch, or are they the bait?

We know each child will learn what they live.  
How can we keep it positive?  
How can we move them away from the screen,  
and make them go, when the signal turns green?  
If we treat each growing brain with care,  
if we teach each heart to love and share,  
will we grow good fruit from the seeds we bear?

I really can't tell you. I just don't know.  
I'm only a poet with rhymes that flow.  
These little wonders of salt and light...  
let's keep them safe and hug them tight.  
These little wonders of salt and light...  
I guess we just kiss them, and say good night!

By Terry E. Carter, © Nov. 2018