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The Calming Waters

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The Calming Waters

– Robert Fraser

Bill! Go play in the sink! Now!

So my highly agitated four-year-old
Finds the wooden stepstool I built for him
and carries it to the front
of the kitchen sink.

He steps onto the stool, reaches across the sink,
and turns the valve.

Instantly, miraculously,
the clear water pours from the faucet,
splatters into the stainless steel sink,
and spills down the drain.

Draining my tormented and mad son.

Turbulence relieves turbulence.
Swirling eddies create order from chaos.
Overflowing waves from a plastic cup
lap at his hands like a puppy dog.

The whirlpool into the drain
is the iris of a lens,
focusing his mind,

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forcing it to pull in the twenty-or-so fishing poles
off the back of the boat,
and concentrate on just one.

I am sure that some ancient ancestor
had a dwelling next to a rushing stream.
And after a long day of arduous, tense hunting,
found relief in the stream,
bathing his feet,
listening to the bubbling,
watching the never-still surface.

I am sure his hunter's instincts were good,
For often my son is like the nervous, edgy spider
in the middle of its web,
acutely aware and hypersensitive to any minute movement.
Of such stuff are great hunters made.
But even great hunters require relief, solace.

So tonight my son washes the misfiring synapses of his brain into quietude,
Preparing for the next hunt.