

**Parenting Poetry: Dylan Edition
(for Dylan at 14 months)**

by Linda Lee

When you first
bapped your little hands together
in the sign for “more”
I thought oh!
He is a prodigy.
But now that I’ve seen how you
so eagerly throw yourself backwards
in order to smash your skull on the
nearest hard surface
I am a little worried
about your future
test scores.

:::

So tell me
if I took this Eggo waffle
and wiped it on the floor
collecting a repulsive mix of
pine needles, filth, and animal hair
would you
eat it
THEN?

:::

They say do unto others
as you would have them
do unto you
and frankly
the notion of
someone squirming their fingers
into my armpits and
wiggling them around
while I shrieked with hysterical
uncontrollable
laughter
sounds really really
unpleasant.
But that doesn’t mean
I am going to stop
doing it
unto
to you.

:::

I love the heft of your warm body
your outflung hands
your curious glances
but seriously, kid.

Could you do me a solid
and *hang on* when I carry you?

Consider the
koala

or perhaps the
tree frog.

Both fine examples
of the methodology I would prefer
that you employ

instead of this business
that involves MY LEFT ARM

FALLING

OFF.

:::

Oh my god!

Oh my god!

Did you hurt yourself?

What is the matter

is there

blood?

Why

why

why are you shrieking like that?

What—

oh.

Oh, I see.

Your ball has
rolled under the couch.

Sure, I guess I can get that for you.

Just let me

take a minute

to ride out the palpitations

while shooting you the double eagle salute

first.

:::

You can say

ball

Dada

Mama

dog

kittycat.

You can walk, run, climb
and play peekaboo.
You are growing so fast,
sniglet
but on the issue of
getting yourself trapped between the couch and the side table
and sitting there bonking your head and wailing in frustration
let's be honest
there hasn't really been any
improvement
in months.
:::
At bedtime
you used to fit in the
crook of my arm
Now your body sprawls
from my shoulder
to my knees
and soon
we won't sit
in a rocking chair
any more.
But for now we are here
you and I
in this
chair
in this
moment.
Shhhhhhhh.
The room is dark
the room is quiet
and we are
here.