

## The Summer We Didn't Die

That year, that summer, that vacation  
we played out there in the cottonwood—  
we were young; we had to be brave.  
Far out on those limbs above air,

we played out there in the cottonwood—  
above grown-ups who shouted, "Come down!"  
Far out on those limbs above air  
we were brave in that summer that year.

Above grown-ups who shouted, "Come down,  
you'll be killed!" we were scared but held on.  
We were brave in that summer that year.  
No one could make us come down.

"You'll be killed!" We were scared but held on.  
That year, that summer, that vacation,  
no one could make us come down.  
We were young. We had to be brave.

—*William Stafford*

## A Pantoum for Blue

I gaze into blue,  
I taste salt in my mouth:  
my hand meets bottomless ocean indigo as it douses  
my greedy fingers.

I taste salt in my mouth  
as I suckle  
my greedy fingers  
I live in colors

as I suckly  
the blue from this moment  
I live in colors,  
as I wrap myself in blue:

the blue from this moment.  
The sky blazes the brightest cobalt.  
I wrap myself in blue.  
I live in colors.

The sky blazes the brightest cobalt:  
so blue it hurts to look.  
I wrap myself in blue,  
and I imagine your eyes:

so blue, it hurts to look.  
And I imagine your eyes,  
deep as the salty-sweet ocean:  
I gaze into blue.

—*Bailey Irving, grade 7*