

# The Hollow Affronts, Internal

*by* Johnny Dantonio

It's a tough thing to become a father,  
a contradiction;  
guiding a child to avoid the things  
that you know about so well.

This is the forgotten recognition of what it is to be daddy;  
spending years,  
decades,  
revisiting your remorse,  
without telling of it:  
actions prompting your scold  
because of their familiarity,  
revealing that of your own past,  
which you hate;  
reproaches,  
revisitings,  
of ugliness, intramural.

But the process is a cleansing,  
purging and reckoning,  
where the places below left barren,  
the hollow affronts, internal,  
they warm  
and then dissolve,  
a natural healing deserved  
for looking out on the world  
and, without hesitation,  
acknowledging it is no longer yours.

