

May the Glad Inherit

by Mathew Paust

They have at birth wings of the glad,
before they understand they're born to die
before they've found a god or learned denial to ease them on the
way
they're bubbly babes who trust their moms if not, as well, their
fathers--
their cries are healthy cries, relishing comfort and love and such--
they'd rather warble, praising wonders, than simply screech

All creatures know death at their very core, a tacit default--
and instinct, of innocents of the fruit of Knowledge, leads them
undespairing
all the way
but comprehension brings a whole new game of espy and deny--
the accelerating recognition of signs ever encroaching on
deceptive routes of escape

The deep-sleep ogre that flees a dream-shouted **BOO!** returns by
day
in smug authority dress, casting looks and toxic odor
the dashed expectation, sting of a quiet *no*, grownup's tears,
grief's piteous wail...
things that tug the ragged curtain back enough for the glimpse
that chills all hearts, that those with wings of the glad
can leave behind

Those with wings of the glad carry merriment in their eyes
and their laughter is jolly and kind
though they cry and die like the rest

