

Building Blocks  
*For Brady and Jillian*

He wraps small-fingered hands around the sanded wooden cube  
painted with red acrylic  
and crowns the tower that sways  
from his feather touch.

She lays on her stomach, pink fleece and baby smell:  
talcum powder and Desitin  
cling softly as breath  
to her rose petal skin.

Her legs kick out and back,  
swimming nowhere.  
He touches her face with fingertips  
and she blinks through giggles.  
Mirrored features, two years different.  
They share wooden blocks, stuffed animals,  
blue eyes and hiccupping laughter.

Her wrinkled fists curl reflexively  
around his fingers and the carpet strands,  
holding them motionless against the relentless turning of the earth  
and time.

He will always be older.  
He will walk her to school amid crisp leaf rustle  
and hold her hand in crosswalks.  
They will share cardboard box forts and ghost stories.  
He will ask her about bullies, then boyfriends  
and listen for her car door  
at curfew.

They will drift apart and together, sailboats pulled by life's currents  
on the tides.  
They will share the same harbor.

They will gather before Christmas trees and icicle lights  
with foil-wrapped packages and sugar cookies  
and children  
who share blue eyes and hiccupping laughter.

Now, though, the world waits on them.  
She watches him with moon wide eyes  
as he stacks blocks into towers and castles and walls  
around them both.  
He will keep them safe together.