Small Wonder

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by Michael J. Bartosh
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THE SUN was glaring all around me as I sat in the shade of an elm tree in Lakewood while waiting for a transit bus. The houses in the distance seemed to waver as the heat rose from the winding streets and walkways. Even the birds seemed listless as they stayed in the cooling shade of the leaves in the tree above me. I peered up and down the streets for a sign of the already tardy bus but there was no movement from anything. The only audible sounds were the low hum of air conditioners and the rush of an occasional jet passing overhead.

I saw the boy as he rounded the corner by Hampden Avenue, when suddenly he stopped in the middle of the sidewalk on the opposite side of the street. I heard him shriek, breaking the dead air with vibrations of his high-pitched howl, as he looked in numb terror at his feet. I was prompted to come to his assistance when he saw me and waved his hand in his assurance of lack of injury. I sat back down and pretended to look down the street at some infinitely distant object while actually gazing at him from the corner of my eye.

He seemed rather poorly dressed in a pair of cutoffs, and a badly torn T-shirt; he was lacking a pair of shoes. The boy appeared to be around nine or ten years old judging by his size and looks. He was bent over on the sidewalk and seemed to be looking for an object. From my vantage point, I could see nothing when suddenly he leaped in delight as he put something in his left palm. Again he looked at me and seemed satisfied that I was not spying on him by the grin that crossed his face momentarily. Creeping to the edge of
the street, he placed the object under a small tuft of sod and gently patted it back in place. He then withdrew to the sidewalk again and steadily walked in the direction from which he had originally come.

The boy's actions aroused my curiosity and caused me to leave the comfort of the shade in order to search for the hidden treasure. I approached the opposite side of the street and sought the cache with success. I lifted the tuft to reveal the object just as the bus approached the stop by the opposite side.

I have often wondered about the small, lifeless, black bug I saw lying in the dirt under the grass that day, and my thoughts about a youngster and his loving care as I rode the bus to the steaming, hot, busy city in my private silence.

Stars

by Kurt Godden

English, Senior

The concentrating universal brow
of God is brimmed with gleaming speckles of sweat.
The chessboard Earth below awaits the master's touch. Anxiously, bishops and knights direct their gaping stares aloft and quaver with greed. While seminal hate of slaver dribbles in streams upon their chins, they are poised like phalli hot with ravenous lust to rape the enemy's queen. A glistening droplet of sweat beads up and plummets into the indecisive player's board. The chessmen attack "An omen," they cry "a signal!" But the battle ends in premature defeat for the zealous suicidal toys of God.