



[Home](#)

[Winter-Spring 2013](#)

[Fall-Winter 2012-2013](#)

[Summer-Fall 2012](#)

[Spring-Summer 2012](#)

[Autumn-Winter 2011-12](#)

[Summer 2011](#)

[Winter/Spring 2011](#)

[Autumn/Winter 2011](#)

[Summer 2010](#)

[Spring 2010](#)

[Winter 2010](#)

[Autumn 2009](#)

[Summer 2009](#)

[Spring 2009](#)

[Autumn 2008](#)

[Summer 2008](#)

[Spring/Summer 2008](#)

[Winter/Spring 2008](#)

[Editor's Note](#)

[Guidelines](#)

[Contact](#)

Three Poems

By Jason Visconti

The Epitaph I Scrawled in Kindergarten

Not knowing men made stuff
even for graves

and in the midst of a drawing I doted on
with a roundabout pen

I unwittingly serviced my soul with no gray hairs at all:
it was, as you'd expect,

a phrase I'd snagged from a picture book,
or the chiming exclamations in my favorite cartoon,

or the perilous journey of crayon crossing the lines,
interrupted when I'd line up for lunch and be well.

The Wake

I try to tell myself this is sleep.
It is Sunday morning, the cat is napping
at his feet, the room is dark

except for a hing of daylight coming through
the window, I sit cross-legged
the good son, waiting on the move

of a limb, the curl of a toe,
his face changing from the obvious
stasis of a dream

to one that always seems working,
I roll his shoulders to say *this now is waking*,
which of course itself is a comfortable dream

that's actually happening, it is Sunday morning
I stand and wonder why he's already dressed
why he's lying on his back like someone propped him up

then dropped him down, lost him to a weight
beyond this world, a posture trapped
in the middle of the act,

why the pause doesn't show on his face,
and if it's Sunday, if it's still slow morning
drill, if it's about waking to his son

in the inevitable guile of time's watch,

here, here is my hand,
wake up to the world.

The Oath

Each sworn syllable
dripping like water colors

down a swampy page
its own blue

arrow
wobbles:

streak
of my conviction

Jason Visconti, who is pursuing a certificate in computerized accounting, has had his poems published in several journals, such as *Indigo Rising* and *Orange Room Review*. He admires the works of Billy Collins, Philip Levine, and Sharon Olds.

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