

*Fair Day, or to the river
with my Little Fish*

by Paul Koniecki

We came to the circus grounds
by small train, not a toy in the forest,
but the fog swaddled everything.

Between galena tintured arms of
trees branching to smaller fingerlings
and capillaries of damp brown hair

on the steam engine swam.
And Adam and I immersed in it
on the front most wooden bench

holding hands. And I whispered this
is where the royals
of divergent evolution reside.

for Adam Rainer, the only recorded adult little person and adult giant in history.

Recently, the Nation published "How-To" by Anders Carlson-Wee, which sparked controversy over appropriation and abelist language. We accepted "Fair Day" before "How-to" was published. This poem also discusses deformity. The speaker, Adam's mother, is worried about her son and brings him to see the circus. Her reflections come from a place of empathy and love, and she is trying to convince herself that "deformity is where and how the magic enters in." The speaker is separate from the poet.

God has many plans and we
are two of them. Better to see the fault
in others and the beauty in ourselves.

Deformity is where and how
the magic enters in.