

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Gary Grossman: Two Poems

Gary Grossman · Tuesday, August 25th, 2026

Portrait as Grandson

When daughter Rose
excavates a picture
from my moth-eaten
baby book, it's
clear that DNA
sculpts. Rose says,
eyes, nose, and mouth
are yours, ears from
hubby, as is baby
Nolan's cafe au lait
skin and black hair.

Born a month early —
impatience, another
shared trait — I've
become agile at
decoding his cues:
mews – fatigue,
wails – reflux,
fish-mouth swish
back and forth
against my chest,
bottle, now, damn it,
then I watch his lips
latch tighter than
a vampire squid.

Today's equinox
brings his first spring.
He is four months
old and the Yoshino
cherries have just
announced their

blossoms —
the wind whirling
fuchsia and ivory.

*

Sentinel

The kids splash in the shallow end,
a veil of shimmering silver butterflies

rising and falling, as summer bliss
sands the burrs off chlorinated air.

My girls, six and ten play Marco Polo
as Barb and I sit adjacent, on the pool's

rough concrete edge, submerging our
sun baked legs, eating lunch treats,

everything subs, from DeAngelos.
Cannonballing kids send swells

through the pool, while the raven-haired,
swim team lifeguard scrolls Instagram,

and the gym rat guard chats up yet
one more string bikini. Nearby, sit

acquaintances Becky and Ron,
ex-prom king and queen,

their son Aaron, almost lost to another pool
four years ago, everybody watching,

nobody watching as he first went face down
then sank. Becky screamed, jumped in,

thumped his rib cage even as she
dragged him to the pool's rough lip.

Today eight-year-old Aaron's playing
with the older boys in the far deep end,

he is blond, tan, and could be confused
with so many other boys.

(Featured image from [Pexels](#))

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