

## Our Son Swears He Has 102 Gallons of Water in His Body

by Naomi Shihab Nye

Somewhere a mistaken word distorts the sum:  
*divide* becomes *multiply* so he'd wrestle his parents  
who defy what he insists. *I did the problem*  
and my teacher said *I was right!*

- 5 Light strokes the dashboard.  
We are years away from its source.  
*Remember that jug of milk?*  
*No way you're carrying one hundred of those!*  
But he knows. He always knows. We're idiots  
10 without worksheets to back us up. His mother never remembers  
what a megabyte means and his dad fainted on an airplane once  
and smashed his head on the drinks cart. We're nice but we're  
not always smart. It's the fact you live with, having parents.

- 15 Later in a calmer moment his dad recalculates  
the sum and it comes out true.  
Instead of carrying giant waterfalls inside,  
we're streams, sweet pools, something to dip into  
with an old metal cup, like the one we took camping,  
that nobody could break.