



WANG PING

EDGE

This is what children do:
they open the gates latched from inside,
the way electricity jolts through the nerve system—
like weeping, laughing without disguise,
like acknowledging hidden wounds.

And the things they ask shamelessly:
What is the wind? What is the night
that births the stars to make our day?
What is the pain that brings us close
to the heart? What heart that belives
misery doesn't come from the earth?

They make my hands tremble
when I scrub my son's broken nose,
make me take off shoes and lay down
books to chase among trees, play hide-and-see.
They make my poetic friends laugh:
"What happened to your speed, your brain?"
And my boss would simply ask:
"Have you lost your edge since you gave birth?"

Yes, I say without apology.
When he calls out for me, my three-year-old "sage,"
his lips awash with blood and snot,
when he demands my hands, my chapped mouth
the way he demanded my breasts,
the lock gate lifts, and the heart
becomes an ocean.