

# My Son Enters Heaven With Octavio Paz

By Jodie Shull

*Angelo Carli Poetry Prize--First Place Winner, Poetry*

Against a boundless field of midnight black,  
Souls gather like small beads of holy water  
And travel slowly up the strings  
Of one enormous golden harp  
Toward the gates of heaven.  
Gates for those who died of ailments, age, or accidents  
And one reserved for those who died of broken hearts.  
Here Senor Octavio approaches,  
Wearing a tuxedo and fingering a slim cigar,  
Behind him is my son, cap turned backwards,  
Shirt untucked, a little peach-fuzz on his chin.  
Senor Paz, if it be your will,  
Please take his hand.  
Beneath the bruised and fallen hearts of nations  
Lie the ruins of the smallest lives.