

Ode to a Small Boy of Spring

Danielle Ladd

He is bouncing green grass
in the straw-colored sunlight
of an early Spring afternoon,
laughter echoing up through the branches
of the matriarch magnolia tree.

He slips up the limbs

part squirrel
part snake
part puppy dog's tail

Feet and toes and fingers
test this branch—

— no, that—

testing physics in real time

pushing limits

learning what a leaf knows.