

“How Do I Know When I’ve Suffered Enough?”

—Jennifer Hall-Farley

Do not expect too much of your feet.
They itch, they tickle, they ache,
they strain to curl inside your boots
like pink armadillos protecting themselves
from the car that crushes them.

Forgive them their murderous rampage
through damp grass over acorn hats,
jagged bits of rock & glass,
bee stings inciting violence to your toes.

There is always one more indignity,
one last howl burning its brand in your heel.

Try not to feel sorrow for newer wounds.
They will have their days to languish
in their lavish scars. Today,

forgive each suicidal lunge
your littlest rascal takes
against a corner of the coffee table.
Allow your fearless ankle to dance

the Twist. When you think
you have suffered enough,
you will suffer more—
joking, jumping & walking away.

Your feet betray you. Let them
have their moments. Bathe them
in the trickle of a stream
scented with coppery oils.
Lead them, powdered & regal,
along the broken streets

to the guillotine.

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