

## Pretending

By Ardith Trudzik

When Daddy plays his tricks on me,  
he checks how I behave.  
If I can laugh and not show fear,  
he'll think me very brave.  
So when he stuffs me in the trunk,  
of the old Model T  
and shuts the hard cold steel lid down,  
I think that *I'm not me*.  
The old car bounces all around  
as he drives down the lane.  
Fears rise like fumes choking my head  
*I'm not me* once again.  
Instead I'm a huge genie man  
stuffed in a small brass case  
though I can't breathe for years and years  
I lie in this small space  
till I'm discovered—at long last  
By Daddy and my brother.  
They watch me stretch to my full height  
And laugh to one another.



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