

Talking About the Day

~by Jim Daniels

Each night after reading three books to my two children—
we each picked one—to unwind them into dreamland,
I'd turn off the light and sit between their beds
in the wide junk-shop rocker I'd reupholstered blue,
still feeling the close-reading warmth of their bodies beside me,
and ask them to talk about the day—*we did this,*
we did that, sometimes leading somewhere, sometimes
not, but always ending up at the happy ending of *now*.
Now, in still darkness, listening to their breath slow and ease
into sleep's regular rhythm.

Grown now, you might've guessed.

The past tense solid, unyielding, against the acidic drip
of recent years. But how it calmed us then, rewinding
the gentle loop, and in the trusting darkness, pressing *play*.