

I'm not one to miss the irony that my husband—who took the side of the mothers on the internet and sent out a few flames in their defense—is also the man who drove off shortly thereafter with his computer in the back seat, leaving me—yes—with our two small children.

Where was he when the orb weaver bit?

I'm not going to kill my children. I'm among the majority of parents—single or not—who don't want to see our children suffer a disappointment, never mind a hideous death. To repeat, I have resources—a secure income, age, a therapist, sobriety, and the knowledge of when to ask for help all the time. But I've had plenty of spider days, days—and nights—when I thought: I just can't do this.

And I can definitely see the time, before my kids are safely off to college when I yell at them so loud my eyeballs hurt.

What Binds Us

Cheryl Wilder

When my grandmother and mother are together they get asked if they are twins—

my mom has to hear how she's the younger, uglier one.

I don't think grandmother means to hurt her

but since she doesn't know how to speak of my

grandfather dying, she calls

mom a murderer for putting a sick cat to sleep.

He isn't my mom's dad, that grandfather died years ago

talking of how his third wife was karma

for the treatment of his first wife,

my grandmother, who thanks me for thinking of her

when I send school pictures of my son. My grandmother

whose children were stolen from her, who allowed them to believe

she didn't want them, which is what their father said—my grandfather—

who died

telling no one. My mom,

who looks more aged than her mother, never

asked any questions, her sister asked so many

she shot herself.

The cat, who was sick, my mom replaced with a dog

so something would look forward to her

coming home.