

Practiced Presence: On Fathers and Care.

I used to think fatherhood
was a mask you wore,
or a shadow that chased you,
or an outline you tried to fill in,
before anyone noticed the gaps.

But presence...
presence turns out to be simpler.

It's the courage to stay.

So, if there's anyone listening
who knows this ache,

this hunger to unlearn
the noise you were raised on,
know this:

I'm still learning, too.

I'm doing something simple...
a promise,
made with my body,
not my mouth.

I'm here now,
and I'm not leaving my own life again.

If presence is a door,
then tonight,
I'm standing in the doorway,
open.

This is me,
stepping into the life
I almost didn't know how to claim.

This is me,
choosing presence over performance.

Presence over inheritance.

A life lived forward,
not in relapse.

One step.

But it's a step
out of the shadow...
and into the open.

Not perfect...

just present.

~ Tim Hogue