

Gravity

Erica Womer

He's six years old and still convinced gravity can be overcome if only he pumps his legs hard enough. He keeps his eyes shut tight and releases his hold on the sun-warmed metal chains hanging by his sides, slowly extending his arms like wings as he propels backward into space, believing with everything he has that if he really wanted, he could swing forward and just keep going, high past the clouds and into the stars. He's six years old and fantasy is still more plausible than reality. Recess is a world all its own. Here, a scraped knee, a row of stitches, are nothing more than setbacks in a world full of possibilities. He's six years old and wants nothing more than to fly. He's six years old and impossible is still just a word, an idea he has yet to understand. He swings his legs forward and his stomach flip-flops, dropping down to his feet as he allows the momentum to push him forward, to take him away from the seat beneath him. That cradle of protection that held him safe but kept him tethered down. In that moment, his eyes snap wide open, a grin painting itself across his face. That singular, precious moment and he moves forward and up, toward the sun. He's six years old and hasn't yet hit the ground.