

Leaps

First Place Literature

The summer the brown grasshoppers
leapt from dry grass
in numbers that my grandpa said
seemed like an Egyptian plague,
my brother and I galloped
through the yard, our knees
angling up to imitate
the shape of these
straw-armored creatures whose legs
could launch them higher and further
than our heavy feet
would ever go.
We chased them down, clapped
our small, soft palms around them,
cupped them in a protective
darkness, delighting in
the delicate kicks we felt
inside our hands,
and took them to where grandpa stood.
Shears in hand, he cut off their heads,
and we watched them jump their
crazy headless jumps,
loved them, leapt eagerly away
too quick to see how their
jumps came lower and lower
to the ground, how they
finally slowed and lay on their sides.

-Ellen Satrom