

Watching Crocs on PBS

Max is wedged between Daddy and Mana
Joey baby-draped on Daddy's torso,
Wordless, we watch crocodiles slide long
through black water on a Madagascar river.

We watch the crocs' watchers too,
colorful clutch of villagers,
smiling reverent throng at river's edge.

Joey points to the crocs, then looks back
to Manna and Daddy *significance* and *yes-
reverence* writ wide on his perfect face,
awe his wordless communication.

Max, newly four, is moving into his head,
carried there by language.

"Do crocodiles *eat* people?"
"I'm not scared of crocodiles..."
"Are their teeth *real* sharp?"

Daddy, man-son of Manna,
says nothing,
smiles on his clutch of sons
the fair one, the dark one,
back to Manna
significance and *yes reverence*
writ wide on his handsome face.

Manna smiles back
Awe our wordless communication.

Mary, Mother of Colin
Mana Grandmother of Joey and Max