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# Pro Rege

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Volume 34  
Number 2 *Fine Arts Issue 2005*

Article 5

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December 2005

## Made Ya Look!

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### Recommended Citation

De Smith, Bob (2005) "Made Ya Look!," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 34: No. 2, 10 - 11.  
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# Made ya look!

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*Robert J. De Smith*

In an hour's worth  
Of backyard work  
I must have heard it thirty times.

When recess begins  
Across the green schoolyard,  
And I feel children  
Spilling out of doorways,

I swear I hear it:  
“Dad!”

I look up every time.

It could be “Dad” that I hear—  
I have a child in the school—  
In fact, my wife could be  
On recess duty at this instant.

Again I hear, “Dad!”

I scan the field:  
I see soccer,  
Tag, secrets,

But no one in distress,  
Holding a shin,  
Or waving and jumping  
A full-bodied greeting  
(I imagine my daughter, her braids bouncing).

“Dad!”

Are there that many  
Kids named “Chad” or “Zach”?

Is everyone screaming they're “mad”  
Or “sad”—or “glad”?

Am I just hearing over and over  
The midwestern

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“Yeah!” as a basket  
Is scored or a prank pulled?

But I can’t shake  
The low-grade alertness  
The “æ” vowel  
Sends down my neck.

Someone’s calling *me*?

Okay, so they’re all my kids:  
It’s a parent-run school,  
My wife’s a teacher.  
I’ve taught its graduates  
(Some my wife has taught, too).

My kids have spent all  
Their grade school years there;  
I’ve coached its players,  
Seen its concerts,  
Strolled through halls of its macaroni art.

But that’s not enough—  
They’re calling *me*.  
Okay, they’re not, but it’s how I feel.

Is this how we live?

Our hands on a shovel handle  
Or pruner or wrench  
With a tingle dropping  
Down spines  
Because someone needs us?