

Sometimes When the Kids Come Home

I tell them their mother has joined the circus,
taken her red nose and juggling balls
from the summer she spent at Camp Winnarainbow

with Wavy Gravy where she tap danced
on stage wearing a ruffled dress
that made her look like

a fifty year old Shirley Temple.
They're too young to know who Wavy Gravy is,
let alone Shirley Temple,

so I tell them he's the clown
who was a roadie for the Grateful Dead
and a Ben and Jerry's ice cream flavor.

Sometimes I tell them their mother
picked pockets in Budapest on the Váci Utca,
ran with the bulls through the streets of Pamplona,

sailed in a saucepan under the Golden Gate Bridge
singing *My Little Runaway*.
I've got a hundred different stories.

I know one of them is true.