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Diane Webster

King of the Hill

I always think of myself
in the middle of a ladder,
a beanstalk tree,
or a pile of bones.
As people climb, I allow
my legs, my hands, my shoulders
to be used for the trip upward.

But I stay. Some of us have to.
To anchor the climb
for those who must climb.
I am sad to see them leave,
but maybe glad I'm not
king of the hill meeting all
who challenge my status
with a push over the edge.

Like in grade school
when I pushed a little kid
off the cement steps, and he cried.
I thought I'd get in trouble
if he told the teacher
so I told him he could hit me
and then we'd be even.
I knew I could take
a punch in the shoulder
from a little kid like him,
but I didn't expect
a slug in the gut.

Here, take my hand.
I'll help you up.

Diane Webster's work has appeared in *El Portal*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *Eunoia Review*, and other literary magazines. She says that her "goal is to remain open to poetry ideas in every-day life, nature or an overheard phrase."