

## [Yvonne M. Estrada: Poem](#) [1]

March 5, 2014 [Honoring Rukeyser](#) [2]

### **In the Balance**

In dark blue dawn downtown  
a man asks for change.  
My seven-year-old son watches  
me dig in a pocket.  
He asks "Why did you give  
him money?"  
I hold my breath  
while answers slide off  
the heap of reasons  
I could use to explain  
charity, poverty, loss,  
do unto others, or karma.  
His perfect needs-to-know face waits.  
I check with the sky,  
6:00 a.m. and Morning Star  
holds a cosmic scale.  
In one pan are gas station, old muscle car,  
mother and son;  
the other pan will be filled  
with the words I say,  
destitute people my son  
will encounter, and future actions  
he will take.  
My response rushes out with my exhalation,  
"Because he doesn't have any, and we do."  
He nods like a monk,  
absorbs the weight  
of this. I watch him change;  
his young heart expands,  
and his world levels out  
for a time.



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### Art Information

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Yvonne M. Estrada is a poet and photographer. She recently published a chapbook, *My Name on Top of Yours*, that contains a crown of sonnets illustrated by original photographs. Her poems have also appeared in *Mischief*, *Caprice and Other Poetic Strategies*, *Pulse Magazine*, *Verse Wisconsin*, and *GuerrillaReads.com* #8.

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[1] <https://www.talkingwriting.com/yvonne-m-estrada-poem>

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