

# Television's Child

by Glen Kirkland

1	The moment he slipped from the womb, his parents plugged his umbilical cord*		and see if their boy would talk to them and seek out friends. From the first minute of silence,
5	into a living room outlet and sat him in a corner, where his eyes grew large with cathode* glow, his mind throbbed with shifting colours,	40	the boy missed television; for he was empty of language and colours and movement. The world around him lay passive,
10	and his ears echoed with voices speaking always to someone else.	45	awaiting his touch.
	He was fed		His parents stood by watching as he blinked and tried to find within himself some understanding of
15	and clothed, it's true, but no one ever spoke to him and expected a response. His parents told him things like,	50	pattern, forward movement, possibilities. Nothing was there that made sense, however. His mind was a scrapbook
20	"Go to bed," "Eat your vegetables," and "Turn that down," and he always did.	55	of images that did not connect, his present was simply where he was now, and his future was empty of possibilities.
	His mom and dad thought him good-natured, obedient, and quiet. They didn't worry, for in their hectic days, they needed their child to be	60	"Oh, plug him in again!" cried his mother. "I can't stand to see him look so alone." And so, he glowed again
25	the way he was.	65	with cathode eyes and stray thoughts of selfhood went running back into a forest of shifting colours,
	When the boy was 6 and still spoke no more than a few words, his parents decided	70	wondrous sounds, and profound numbness.
35	to unplug his cord		

\* An umbilical cord connects a mother to her unborn child to support its development in the womb.

\* Cathode – referring to electricity, and movement of negatively charged electrons.