**Encouragement**

by Carrie Fisher

Let’s view his work standing beside him,

Don’t ask him to hand it across,

Our approach is the factor deciding

His creative profit or loss.

For if he’s been painting to please us

Reactions are risky both ways,

Unthinking assessments are harmful,

Whether we censure or praise.

It’s better to ask how he’s feeling

About this new picture he’s done,

And agree that the process of painting

Is extremely rewarding and fun.

This way we encourage his doing,

The act of creation’s the thrill;

By sharing his interest, we free him

To explore and express what he will.

...Young Jan made a swirly hand painting.

Her mother took one look and cried,

“Well this is so good we must frame it!”

Her beaming friends shared in her pride.

Jan was amazed at her triumph,

But now there were problems to face,

All the pictures she made must be pleasing

Or her efforts would end in disgrace.

Art became serious business.

The joy she had felt was reversed,

She tried, but no subsequent pictures

Could be made to resemble the first.

So hand painting lost its attraction.

She dropped it to play in the store.

Alert to judgemental reaction

She chose not to paint any more.

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