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A Maiden Voyage

When once we say goodbye, as loveships often do can we say hello again and have a friendship too?
To cast aside the hardship, that comes from strife and pain and begin a brand new kinship as friends once again?
We'll never speak the words that sank our ship before and have faith in the highship that opens every door?
We will throw away the anchors that made the ship so weak and sail to better islands for the happiness we seek?
As we pass by the darkships that made our ship so low shielding ourselves from hateships that make our movement slow,
A loveship built on friendship can surpass any storm
If goodbye was with much sadness; and hello is much more warm.

Sheila Chapton
Chicago, Ill.

Women

She's an angel in truth
A demon in fiction
A woman's the greatest
of all contradictions.
She's afraid of a cockroach
She'll scream at a mouse
But she'll tackle a husband
as big as a house.
She'll take him for better
She'll take him for worse
She'll split his head open
and then be his nurse.
And when he is well and can get out of bed
She'll pick up a tea pot and throw it at his head
She's faithful, deceitful, keen sighted
and blind.
She's crafty, she's simple, she's cruel
and she's kind
She'll lift a man up
She'll cast a man down.
She'll make him her hero, her ruler,
her clown.
You fancy her this
and find that she's that
For she'll play like a kitten
And fight like a cat
In the morning she will
In the evening she won't
And you're always expecting she will
but she won't.

Thelma Mason

Preliminary

Moisture
warm breath
noses bumping searching for a spot
eyes closed to meditate undisturbed
tongues touch to help souls unite
heart beat fast
keeping track of traveling hands
breath held to lengthen the span
break for air each taking a glance
eyes dreaming
preparing to improve the next one.
A Kiss
a stepping stone to plenty of nothing
or to lots of everything
the choice is exactly that
a choice.

Diane Brooks

Wherever Summer and Youth Touch

We smiled.
School days were over again.
It was summertime at last!
Lolling around all day,
Climbing the tallest pine trees
Or playing house in the woods —
We absorbed those lazy blazing days.

It was without warning to earth's children
That a storm swooped upon us,
And washed our mud pies away.
We shot out for home with a zip and a zing,
And reached our doorstep just in time
To see a bok of shrieking lightning
Tear a chunk of our cherry tree away.
And we re afraid.

But we smiled
Because we knew.
And it smiled with a knowing twinkle.

A towering spreading cherry tree,
With luscious ripe fruit blushing red,
Gave us mellow days of summer's riches.
As we plucked from its plentiful branches.

And we smiled
Because we knew.

When cool winds swept its wounded body,
And undressed each arm till bare,
Then rested each leaf at its naked feet,
We knew autumn had caught up to summer's glow.

And we smiled
Because we knew.

Winter chilled its hardy bark,
Shook bits of twigs from its arms,
And covered all its wooden sculpture
With specks of frost and innocent snow.

And we smiled
Because we knew.

Who knows what day or how or where?
But like the birthday boy surprised into silence,
Our wooden skyscraper told tales of brand new blooms;
And put old winter to utter shame.
Spring crept in and pushed out all frigid air.

And we smiled
Because we knew.

For this was no ordinary tree, you see.
It was alive, dancing with zeal and glee —
Ready for any challenge there might be.
It looked Mother Nature square in the face,
And said with a kind of wisdom and grace,
"I'm a fortress of a structure, I tower so very high!
Sometimes my sprawling branches touch the distant sky."

"My bark is so thick and tough all about.
My trunk is so huge, so steady and stout.
But these things don't make me noble and strong;
They don't make me complete or unique.
There's something different of which I speak.
You can't see it, touch it or hear it call.
But you can feel it inside when you're feeling small —
When the world is crushing your soul and goals."

"At times dark moments make you sad and low.
But it's waiting there inside you,
All ready and raring to go!
Ready to flower you with trust and such."

And we laughed right out loud
Because we knew.

Our cherry tree kept a secret of inner life —
A secret for living through sunshine and strife.
But when that awful lightning charge
Chopped only its tough trunk apart,
It reached right over beside it
And took our plum tree's heart.

And it's summertime once more.

Shirley Vaughn - Hammond
Atco, N.J.

Beautiful Yes

Youc cannot hold
A ray of sunlight
Just feel its warmth
It's such a hopeless
Thing to grasp
Beautiful, yes

You cannot hug
Lakes blue-green water
Just feel its smooth
Coolness
It's such a phantom
Thing to grasp
Beautiful, yes

A cluud's a wonderful bed
That will not carry you
Rainbows full of colors
That cannot be touched
Beautiful, yes

Your reflection is in my eyes
No substance
But
Beautiful, oh yes!

Maxine Taylor Basemore
Detroit, Mich.

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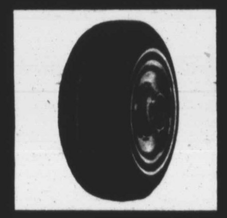
A good friend to have on the road.



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