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The Music Of Life
By Olive DeWitt

I love music, the music of life,
The music of happy shortling infants,
the melody of joyous children playing.

I love the music of autumn leaves,
as they rustle and skip
under the foot of man and maid.

I love the syncopation of raindrops
on roofs
   and raincoats
   and gutters.

I love the bass voice of the angry sea
breaking over the rocks
   and caves
   and cliffs.

And the sacred hymn in minor chords
of the silent cemetery
   where loved ones sleep.

I love the unheard tones
of growing grass
   and tiny seeds
   bursting forth in spring.

I love the instrumentation of the woods,
with leaves
   and birds
   and bees
   and brook,

and jumping fish
and squirrels
and the intermittent
   chords of frogs.

My heart responds to the harmony of God,
as my anticipating ear
   listens to the music of life.

The Prisoner
By Evelyn Bachmann

He was ringed in and walled
By rocks and hills,
Pines, cedars, circumstance
Ignorance.

Out there somewhere
Was another world.
He knew it must be
Because he had glimpsed it in his schoolbooks
Not long ago.

Now,
He must plow, plant,
Tend the critters,
Chop wood;
For Mom and the little 'uns
Depended on his young strength
Since Pa died last spring.

Sometimes,
He watched a plane fly over
Coming from somewhere, going to somewhere,
As he followed the slow miles through corn and thistles
Below in the torpid heat.
He hungered so for the outside
And the ache inside grew so large
That sometimes
He wept like a little 'un,
Cursed Pa for dying
And leaving him among the sullen stones.