

WORDS OF PASSAGE

Richard Kohler

This child is more delightful than fixed memory
 And yet his drunken father reminisces,
 Recalls good old days that never were
 And cannot see the joy that follows in his son's wake.
 This child lives like the colors of his toy fire-truck
 Informing, brightening, whatever forms he touches—
 Red, blue and yellow spring into, out of, his mind:
 Youth, youth that is yet part of the unfled spectrum.

I left that child two days ago—but bid him come,
 Look and live in me for what he hoped to find,
 Leave that evening train, join the unwinding pages
 Of my unwritten life with his. He, black,
 Black youth and lonely boy, has made me ache
 With reaching for completions that are never there—
 No, no, we travel on, fastened to unfixed wishes,
 And pass like waves of one dark, shining sea.

AT THE YEAR'S END

Louise Darcy

I learned to count the years when I was young.
 From days of my majority I knew
 The best was gone, the sweetest songs were sung;
 And all that there was left for me to do
 Was this: to meet each spring with confidence,
 To shelter sorrow on the summer beach;
 And meeting autumn by a pasture fence,
 To arm myself for winter's icy reach.
 So I am mute who have no song to sing,
 And inarticulate before despair,
 Hostage to loneliness, an empty thing
 For all the trees within my heart are bare.
 And every year that ends with failing breath
 Is merely one more anteroom to death.