

COURAGE, POET

**Courage, Poet.
do not let a lack of praise
dull your thoughts
or still your pen**

**Do not let those
who do not understand
numb you into vacant pages.**

**Spill out your heart and mind
with ink of inspiration and
indignation, if you must,
for your words are what you know and what you feel
and who you are
and there is little time to be you.**

**Courage, Artist.
do not let another's vision
color your own
be brave with your brushstrokes --
for your brushstrokes are your truth.**

**Courage, Dancer, Actor, Singer
bring yourself forward
we need your beauty
and your light
especially when all is dark.**

**So if the world comes tumbling down
if all machinery is fused in giant fires
and technology seems the only legacy
as near ashes remain of all the arts--
some may find your words on paper
or a painting or a film
and they can say**

“At last I understand.”

Courage, Poet.

Susan Block, 2004

THE SUMMER HOUSE

I put the chairs away today
the two big white rockers
that presided on the porch this summer.

I put the black iron table away
and the birdhouse painted by the neighbor
From three clay pots, I pulled the withered stems
and tired dirt of once-purple mums,
tossing them across the railing to the yard below—
and then I put the pots away.

The wooden tray that held our glasses,
filled with sun-made tea and ice that cracked,
was wrapped along with two straw fans,
then put upon a shelf indoors.

I remember mornings
we sat close to one another
rocking in those chairs,
picking up each other's rhythm –
within a minute, without a word.

I remember humid, drowsy afternoons
turning chairs away from sun
moving fans across our faces
like two metronomes –
marking the measure of our rocking.

Sometimes, after supper,
watching fireflies fusing into tiny flames,
we'd rock again,
sensing one another's movements –
the back and forth of you and me.

Now, as I put the chairs and all away
I can still smell the purple flowers
and see glasses filled with tea
and fans and fireflies

But through winter's days
I will remember mostly
you and me
and what we shared in rocking chairs
until we are Summer again

Susan Block, 2005