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## These Wants

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# These Wants

by Mark Belair

The bow of the wooden rowboat  
scrapes the beach and you step out  
into ankle-high lake water  
and angle in the polished oars  
and pull the peeling boat  
ashore, far enough so that  
it won't float back out even  
if it storms  
and you trudge toward the rental cabin  
and dip your feet, sandy from the beach,  
into a dented aluminum basin of warm tap water  
and leave damp footprints  
on the dark green porch steps  
then your sun-tautened skin  
chills in the porch shade  
and clinking sounds  
from the still-hidden kitchen  
alert you to a thirst  
you didn't really notice  
out in the boat, rowing  
alone, while a waft  
of onions simmering  
in butter reminds you it's been  
hours since you ate,  
then you notice that the few steps  
that take you through the sitting room

feel ungainly, stiff, you need, after  
all that rowing, to rest your arms and legs  
(and to pause in the bathroom, too)  
but you're eager to tell your  
loved one all about your  
boating adventure  
(in which not much—yet everything!—  
happened) so soldier on  
into the unfamiliar kitchen where  
the familiar back of your loved one  
(as she tries to unscrew a balky cap,  
her hair casually gathered up, her  
lovely swan neck pleading  
for a spray of rosebud kisses)  
stops you in your tracks  
for it dawns on you  
just then  
in the dusky light  
how all these simple wants  
now gathered to a keen point  
of feeling  
are the everyday wants  
(and here your jar-abstracted  
loved one, hearing your approach,  
turns to see your tears  
suddenly well  
so softens in tender perplexity  
which nearly makes them spill)  
you forever  
and ever  
want.

