A Child Came Home

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Abstract

A child came home, Over a scalding plain of bent knuckles and polished steel barrels on a map of unsorted pebbles thrown down into the noon...
Mrs. Reed pushed Mrs. Thompson into the boat and jumped in herself.

"But we can't just go off and leave them all alone!" Mrs. Thompson wailed. "Oh my! We are going off and leaving them! Oh what will they ever do? Stop, somebody. Oh dear! They won't stop! Don't worry, Mrs. Adams! Don't worry. We'll send somebody for you. Oh dear!"

"Sit down!" said Mrs. Reed. "You'll tip us over."

And the boat, in the manner of all good boats, sailed away into the sunset, and Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Steele went back to their rocks and sat down.

—Janet Stoner

A Child Came Home

A child came home,
Over a scalding plain of
bent knuckles and polished steel barrels
on a map of unsorted pebbles
thrown down into the noon.

A child came home
to give up at the mother's feet
and crawl into the dark place between
the arm and the breast
and smell in the softness there.

And all the night could not move him
from where he rested,
nor all the circumstances of days and days
defy his eternal burrow,

The dark, warm strength of his home.

—Elinor Holmberg