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Little Big Girls

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Little Big Girls

Bill Elgersma

Happiness is: dancing in the living room,
floors creaking, china rattling, while
windows rumble in reprimand
—the groceries hauled in, and you peek
spaghettios, spray cheese, Lucky Charms (with bigger marshmallows),
fruit punch, and crunchy grapes

—someone else's turn to drive when the weather is bad
—clean uniforms, brownies on game day, 6 packs of pop for winning,
and shoes that don't make you feet look big.

And happiness is also getting your picture in the paper,
standing on your tiptoes to be the tallest in the team.

Happiness is not a boy in the stands
waiting for you to finish,
to give him kisses,
and hold his hand
while consciously aware of the fumbles made.

Instead
that peace, like fresh powder in the mountains,
light, fluffy, willing to move at a whim,
—spontaneous as the 6 squirrels on 2nd Avenue
who dare each other to jump tree to tree,
their laughter ringing when they do

and as innocent as three girls who ditch their car in a blizzard,
sporting only flip flops for the ball game.

Happiness is that age between 15 and 18,
where life is getting up to see what the day brings
—friends are more important than parents
—parents are crucial to survival
—and nothing is so serious
that it isn't funny.