

I Knew a Teacher Once
by William Strong

I knew a teacher once
With words as soft
As moths on summer screens.
Brittle bright and
Cruel was not her style.
As others barked,
Her whispers touched the dark
Inside your soul
And seemed to echo there.
The way was sure.
She always took the time:
Refused the rush
Of world report for poems
And pushed aside
The weight of dusty tomes
To scratch her nose
And pass around the mints.
She seemed alive.

You couldn't put her on.
She'd take a book
And make it yours and hers
In magic ways
That made your breath come quick.
Her wink was slight.
The eyes were bright and clear,
A hush of greens.
You'd watch the pause of smile,
A patient blink
That let the question hang.
Her tease would make
You more than eyes and ears.
It often made
Your insides twist and think.
I guess she liked
Her work enough to make
It play for us.