

PRECIOUS LITTLE WE CAN DO

The clubhouse was bedecked with blue ribbons perhaps symbolizing the simpler days of water splashing everywhere. We were just out for a drive when we saw it and thought it must mean something or the boys were having a party tonight because one of them just turned seventy and was feeling kind of blue. The older they get the friskier they get, that's the rule around here anyway.

We drove down to the pond just to see some water and then the ducks came over and we talked to them for an hour or so, mostly about things they couldn't understand. I think that's why they stayed and talked back so vociferously.

It was cloudy and then it was sunny and then a big car drove up and some newlyweds got out and started singing. The ducks were frightened and frankly so were we, and our fear brought us closer. We waddled towards the water prestissimo and paddled for the cattails and waterlilies on the far side, our panic given way to serenity.

The couple left at the end of the song.

A great blue heron circled overhead. We climbed ashore and shook off what water we could, and feathers.

We wrapped ourselves in some blanket from the trunk.

On the way home, my wife, who can be very cruel when she wants to be, says to me, "I prefer the company of loons, their insane, crazy laughter is a comfort for which there is no substitute."

Later that night, I joined the boys at a clubhouse.

They sighed in unison and repeated, "There is precious little we can do, precious little we can do."

Many of Jim's poems feature an individual and the rest of everything. The two exchange material and have a conversation. What more do you want? Many of Jim's poems feature everything first of all and an individual next. The two exchange qualities and have a conversation. What more do you want?

- Arthur Vogelsang