

The Woodworker



What if I'd stayed on that autumn day
When my father worked with wood?
The amber light and tumbling leaves beckoned me,
"Come away for the weekend to play."
"Go...have fun!" he said to me,
But the curling smoke from his pipe bade me,
"Stay...don't be restless...stay," it seemed to say.

"You're young! Have fun!" he said
As the sunlight flashed on his chisel's edge.
Pumpkin pine wanescoting enveloped us
Near the open door,
Glowing like an ancient lantern's beam.
The flickering leaves laughed at his toil
Against the bluest sky.

Through the window pane the fiery dancers teased me,
"Come away!"
"There's plenty of time to work," they scoffed,
"He's old. His time draws near."
"He must leave a mark for the world
To remember he was here."

His black hair, like a raven's wing,
Covered his brow.
It glistened with sweat as the walnut curled from his blade
And fell to the floor.
In his labor there was a sense of purpose,
A desire to do something right
In a world where so much is wrong.

"Go,...now go and have a good time!
I have everything I need right here."
And my restless mind agreed.
I need to put a hundred miles between me and this place
And find something,...something,...something.
And so I went away on that autumn day
As my father made his masterpiece.

Now his chisel is in my hand.
It's edge is dull with rust.
I will sharpen it on his stone;
Polish it on this walnut board he left behind
As the tumbling leaves beckon me,
"Come away!"

But I will stay.
Now that he is gone,
I will stay and make my masterpiece.

~Bruce J Kunkel~