

ISSUE No. 8

DARLING

the art of being a woman





THE HOSTESS

under a southern sky,
behind the bald cypress
she placed a wooden table
made with withered hands
and backyard tools.
jars of fireflies below lofty limbs,
offbeat wicker chairs sinking
cock-eyed through straw and heaven.
we sat, each to our own liking,
knowing no one and yet at home
where nothing matched
and everything was in order.
plates of peculiar design,
general store glasses
and dollar store trinkets,
we dined on comfort.
food of her grandmother's Sundays,
wine of no consequence,
tattered cloth napkins beside
tarnished pitchers, pots and tins
perhaps to the critic unimpressive,
to her guests a formality of ease.
passing bread toward her jubilant face,
we caught eyes with strangers
quickly feeling familiar,
a picnic of drifters, explorers,
of faces next door.
her lively assortment of the mild,
the outspoken, young, old,
the whimsical and mischievous
leaning in on elbows
toward gypsy tales
and sailor's glory.
branding my memory
in that open field,
she kissed each of us farewell
full of content we left,
never having dined
more splendid
or simple.