

**“The Broken Bird”  
an excerpted poem from**

**SHIPWRIGHT**

**by M. RANDOLPH MASON**

He undressed and slipped in with her. He pulled her half onto himself, replicating the position in which he was used to finding her when he awakened. Because her face was on his chest, he could place his left hand on the boney ridge of her back and his right hand cupping the golf ball sized junction of her left shoulder. Lee could not bring himself to pull the covers completely over her head. He played with the hem of the blanket until he had fashioned a breathing hole next to her face.

Lee settled down to reflect until the never remembered onset of sleep.

*“She is not a child. She is a brilliant woman recovering from a devastating illness. Her frail body is getting better; right now she’s just tired. Someday her little emaciated figure will catch up to the breathtaking beauty of her face and hair. You find that you love everything she is and everything she will be. You have not failed the challenge - the reward is this wonderful little child of God. Not to worry.”*

*Searching in vain from room to room  
no succor within my broken heart;  
Stood myself by the rain flecked window  
and stared into the gathering dark.*

*Self pity the source of my last, last tears  
that patted like thunder on the cool wood floor;  
I sentenced myself to go out into the gloom  
and the dusk and the damp outside my door.*

*As I exited my empty, cold broken home  
to pursue and exact my punishment game;  
I heard the thump of your tiny body  
as you crashed into the window pane.*

*In horror I searched in the drift piled leaves  
in the fast falling darkness beneath the sill;  
I desperately, desperately hoped on hope  
such force did not your body kill.*

*At the very last instant of the very last glow  
I carried you inside from the now total night;  
To discover you breathed, tho scarcely at all  
all battered and wet and being so slight.*

*I quickly and carefully wrapped you in cloth  
and tucked you in my shirt, next to my heart;  
And hope upon hope, I prayed my warmth*

*might save your life if it did its part.*

*With care you lived, you flew again  
your dark eyes opened and you spread your wings;  
Though you did not try to share your voice  
I imagined in my heart I could hear you sing.*

*So shared I a miracle with a fragile bird  
one I shall ponder for the rest of my time;  
When realized I, in the saving of yours  
that the life that was saved – in truth, was mine!*

Peace settled also over Lee.

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### ***About the Author***

M. Randolph Mason, the second son of a Navy sea captain, grew up on and around the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and maritime Florida. He is a retired army engineer officer. In his lifetime, he has lived in twenty-two locations, including five years in Europe, and is conversational in three foreign languages. Although sailing is his main avocation, he enjoys painting nature and nautical themes in watercolor and plays several musical instruments, including guitar, piano, trumpet, harmonica, and washtub bass.

Mason's books combine his love of life on the water and his devotion to deep, enduring, and wholesome relationships for his characters. To be sure, there is intimacy, but the author expects the reader to privately engage the characters in every aspect of their relationship.

The author's works are rich in detail of which the author has researched diligently. If he states that the high tide on Scott Creek is +3.49 feet at 5:16 PM on the 2nd of February, 2006... well, you could go to the tide charts to verify that! The author does not expect the reader to know the jargon of boats.

His nautical passion is poignantly expressed in the beautifully descriptive works, *Shipwright* and *Morgan 41*.

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