

## The Lesson of the Moth

by Don Marquis

I was talking to a moth  
the other evening  
he was trying to break into  
an electric light bulb  
and fry himself on the wires

why do you fellows  
pull this stunt I asked him  
because it is the conventional  
thing for moths or why  
if that had been an uncovered  
candle instead of an electric  
light bulb you would  
now be a small unsightly cinder  
have you no sense  
plenty of it he answered  
but at times we get tired  
of using it  
we get bored with the routine  
and crave beauty  
and excitement  
fire is beautiful  
and we know that if we get  
too close it will kill us  
but what does that matter  
it is better to be happy  
for a moment  
and be burned up with beauty  
than to live a long time  
and be bored all the while  
so we wad all our life up  
into one little roll  
and then we shoot the roll  
that is what life is for  
it is better to be part of beauty  
for one instance and then cease to  
exist than to exist forever  
and never be a part of beauty  
our attitude toward life  
is come easy go easy  
we are like humans  
used to be before they became  
too civilized to enjoy themselves

and before I could argue him  
out of his philosophy  
he went and immolated himself  
on a patent cigar lighter  
I do not agree with him  
myself I would rather have  
have half the happiness and twice  
the longevity

but at the same time I wish  
there was something I wanted  
as badly as he wanted to fry himself