

FOR AN OLD MAN

FLORIS CLARK McLAREN

I wish I had listened then. When you began
Those long old stories, I was bored and ran
Outdoors to play; or, older, tactfully drew
The talk away to light immediate things....
And all the while your generation lay
Behind your baffled eyes and wistful speech
Groping toward mine: and I can never reach
It now. The things you did not say
Are buried with you, and the bright thin line
Of contact broken. For I closed a door
And let you go away, your stories all untold:
I wish I had listened more.