

Are You safe?

*I tiptoe up close
Gazing at You
Then run around the corner
And peek.*

*You invite me to sit next to You
But I tremble inside.
Tears fall down my cheeks.
Too scary!*

*You sing a song
Light the fire
And wait.*

*That couch and quilt looks pretty cozy!
I finally burst in and sit down before the fire.
It's warm here.
I like it.*

*After awhile I look over at You again.
You're constant
Smiling.
You tell me a story.
Maybe you're not so bad after all.*

*You invite me to come closer.
Finally, I slowly sit on the other end of the couch
Perched on the edge
So I can get away fast
At the first sign of danger.*

*You ask if I would like to share the quilt.
It looks so warm
But if I get closer
Will You betray me, too?
Men don't feel too safe to me.*

*You hand me a soft, white bunny.
Others gave me presents for favors.
Will You want something, too?*

I slide back a bit and hold the bunny.
I look at Your lap
Hoping, longing, wanting so much
To climb up
And be safe.

I grow sleepy with Your happy stories.
My head is nodding.
I lean against You.
You offer to put Your arm around me.
I slide closer.

I stare again at Your lap
Wishing I had the courage to climb up
But feel terrified inside.
You sense my longing
And invite me with open arms.
Shyly, slowly, with some trepidation I nod, "Yes."
You reach out
And slowly draw me to Yourself.
Sitting on Your lap
Is so much more than I expected!

You place Your arms gently around me
I lay my head gingerly on Your chest
And close my eyes.

Your quiet song begins again.
Rumbling deep within.
I feel so cared for
Comforted
Like I belong.

Suddenly, without warning, my heart explodes
My body wracked with sobs.
I bury my face within Your heart
Feeling Your arms holding me tight.
As the tears subside
I realize raindrops are falling on me.
I look up quizzically.
Though flowing from your liquid eyes

The source is Your heart
Which breaks for me—
A child who longed to be held by her daddy
In comfort and safety
But only found a taking-embrace
And many shattered longings.

Jesus, I think You are becoming safe now.
You don't seek to dominate me.
Your heart breaks for me.
I never saw my daddy cry
Nor did he ever shed a tear
When I begged him to depart.
Yet You hold me carefully.
Perhaps I will go to Your Father one day
When I have learned to trust You a bit more.

Wanda Viola
March 21, 2002

For Rosemary