

Little Crocodile

They sit side by side in leather chairs
their heads bent over a picture book
two generations between them,
today they are joined by words.
He is watching her mouth moving
searching among the shapes it makes
hearing faintly the youth in her voice,
and although she does not stumble
they have fallen together, into the story.
He looks at the colourful pages,
traces with a finger, a picture of
a little crocodile, a lost purse found,
a cowboy hat, some golden coins.
He walks inside this world as she
guides him along an unknown path
connecting things, gathering them up,
giving them to him, like a gift.
Later he tells the story
to the ladies who sit at his table
and the girl who brings them tea
his words falling between blank white china
and the cheerful chatter of silver spoons.
A new light shines in his old grey eyes
from simple unexpected joy.
He has few details left of a distant life
but today he has new memories,
a picture of a little crocodile,
and the youth in the voice of a child.

© Sylvia Anne Jones.