

A MAN IN A BOAT IN THE SUMMER

by Stacy Kidd

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National Guitar

An object shaped like an equilateral triangle
will negate
your pretty boy blues—

behave now.

Across the Mississippi is a stretch
green isn't
but men have wanted
to swim here,
didn't swim here,

dragged along.

What directional, what low humming sound
sticks in the throat.

A river will divide itself
before entering
another & unlike body of water.

The tell strings itself, maybe,
plucks, maybe,
the grass not dead but growing
downward as when

walking
in or wading

out, you're holding

yourself up

on a stair's

railing

to float.

A man in a boat in the summer

a man we
both know talking

among other
men

smiling & we know

the man may
be by a

scar, a

pock mark, cleft
chin

the win some
coo of a bird

call called across

a river &

his head holding
itself a

certain

distance when he laughs

* * *

The man chews his lip and says
he's listening. He's
digging up weeds in a field and folding
laundry across
a gray fence. He's walking
the backroad and gravel
road everyone in town knows. He's holed
up in a red house, holding
hands, and taking notes on what
needs new framing. He's sitting
in a boat in a river with no water, he's telling
you again and again.

* * *

tight en the screws the
win dow screens peel from panes

it's been raining

* * *

a gain: yellow
light in the morning

a john boat in thin water, maybe

a duck hunter, a

deer hunter,
storm moving in from the east, winds

pick up speed and spit
back an out

line of straw hat/ raised hands

* * *

The man is talking to himself

again, like you and me, we talk
to ourselves. We kiss

a whole whole bunch.

We walk along a river & nestle

like burnt out little pigeons but

the man says, our birds
aren't really birds, they're lonesome

hoot & holler and we say

our birds, if they could belly

ache like us, would

tell us to go to hell.

* * *

or water swells

around a man

in a boat

in a river

and water in

late summer wears its one

hunting

hat well

the man tells you

it's only fodder

the river in summer

what its water carries

in, it carries

out, it carries out, a

men

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