

5-1-2013

## Us Vs. Them

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### Recommended Citation

Knape, D. (2013) "Us Vs. Them," *Forces*: Vol. 2013 , Article 54.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.collin.edu/forces/vol2013/iss1/54>

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**Us Vs. Them**

D. KNAPE

Often we long  
To be someone else  
Thinking that will help  
Improve ourselves

Yet being them  
Makes little sense  
We wish we could  
But know we can't

If we could be them  
Who would they be?  
It's rather perplexing  
Personally

We can't be them  
We must be we  
'cause us is all  
we'll ever be.

**WAITING FOR LOVE**

MELISSA TURNER

**Two Worlds (1962)**

BETH TURNER AYERS

There were two houses on the corner, just down the street.  
We stayed on the pavement and passed with speed.  
They didn't belong there.

But the rules of tradition didn't seem to apply.  
Two shacks stood together, alone on my side.  
Referenced with hushed voice.

Too young to care or begin to understand,  
I knew that passing meant a tight grip on my hand.  
I grew and walked alone.

And I noticed the detail: disrepair, cluttered yard,  
Hand-washed clothes on leaning line, life was hard.  
But life lived there.

Though seldom seen, hidden by rickety walls of gray,  
Vacant of laughter or sounds of play.

Then there she was.

With bright shining eyes, a smile filled her face,  
She jumped the frayed rope with style, with grace.  
She saw me.

She paused in her play and she spoke a few words.

"Can you play with me?" I listened and heard.

I wanted to.

"I have to ask my mother." Came my reply.

Mama's answer came quickly. I didn't know why

But I had to stay inside.

It made no sense to me. The contradiction was clear.

Thelma's dark arms could hold me, she could tickle my ear.

I could love her.

But when Thelma went home, she crossed to her side.

She lived in the world where resentment could hide.

Close, but far away.

Don't ask to play with the child who jumps rope in the yard,

That doesn't belong... where life seems hard.

No playing allowed.

And I felt lonely for myself and lonely for the girl

Who lived on the corner in a different world.