

Unprepared

I was not ready
for first grade and long bus rides
I'd been "mama's boy"

puddles on the floor
beneath my school desk displayed
liquid evidence

my grape was not ripe
needing more time on the vine
to mature further

lingering self-doubt
has lurked in the shadows
behind my success

from this distant peak
I can see more clearly now
my long bumpy road



Photo: Woodson Elementary School, Richmond, Missouri, circa 1950, long since demolished and replaced, where I attended my first five grades (1950-1955) before transferring to Knoxville's new two-room school housing eight grades.

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