Hometown

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Hometown

This is the city of my impatience, the city where I heard train whistles as a call to wander, the city where I practiced departure and return. I had hardly learned to walk when for the first time, tired of waiting for Mother, I toddled unafraid up our unpaved street. My small feet clad in Buster Brown shoes headed downtown. Just how far had I gone before my desperate mother caught up with me, kissed and scolded me, took my hand so I could not escape her care?

This is the city where I slipped again from the invisible leash when I was five, while Mother was distracted with conversation or commercial transaction. I found myself alone, stood in front of a bakery and cried for my lost mother. A stranger quieted me with a fresh-baked bun, teaching me the power of tears, the kindness the world offers a wanderer.

I was content to return for a time to the nest of my home, but I had become a fledgling. Someday I would let the train take me wherever it went. Someday I would walk in alien cities. Someday, I would fly.

Wilda Morris