

A Valentine to Remember

Remember valentines in school,
A cupid, hearts, a cartoon bear,
Chosen carefully with thoughts
We were too shy to share,
For one who made your heart beat fast,
And two or three best friends
To Super Glue relationships
We thought would never end?
And underlying every choice
Was that unwritten rule:
You have to get the balance right;
It must be warm, but "cool."

One year I gave a small one
To a girl who'd only been
In class two days and hadn't had
The chance to make a friend.
Her head was down as Teacher
Passed the cards to everyone,
Hoping this would finish quick;
For her it wasn't fun.
But when my card dropped on her desk,
A cautious smile appeared
And stretched into a giant grin
As she read, "I'm glad you're here!"

I got nice cards from many friends,
But now I can't recall
What any of them said, and surely
Not who sent them all.
But I see with perfect clarity
That face three rows away,
Its joy and whispered "Thank You,"
My best Valentine that day.

*Robert D. Smith
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