YOU LEARN

Veronica A. Shoffstall

quoted in Jo Ann Lordahl’s,
_The End of Motherhood: New Identities, New Lives_  

After a while you learn the subtle difference  
Between holding a hand and chaining a soul,

And you learn that love doesn’t mean leaning 
And company doesn’t mean security.

And you begin to learn that kisses aren’t contracts 
And presents aren’t promises,

And you begin to accept your defeats  
With your head up and your eyes open  
With the grace of a women, not the grief of a child,

And you learn to build all your roads on today  
Because tomorrow’s ground is too uncertain for plans  
And futures have a way of falling down in mid-flight.

After a while you learn…  
That even sunshine burns if you get too much.

So you plant your garden and decorate your own soul,  
Instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers.

And you learn that you really can endure…
That you really are strong
And you really do have worth…
And you learn and learn…
With every good-bye you learn.