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## Cordage

Nathaniel Bishop

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## Bishop: Cordage

### CORDAGE

Nathaniel Bishop

The net must be twined  
from the pith of cattails, & the bark  
of a willow made wet so the fiber doesn't break  
when twisted around itself, & around itself, & plaited

to more fiber. Three children winding  
three threads each into string as a fourth  
turns their result into a single rope suitable

to contain a fish, or lash together boats  
against a shamal.

There is strength, here,  
in numbers: the willow's inner bark married  
to the cattail's test, each plant made plural  
& that plural made single,

so that when the cord breaks they mend it,  
& not its principle parts that look  
and look the same.