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## Along the Common Road One Cattail

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PAT BRIDGES

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## Along The Common Road One Cattail—

It resembled, if not your name, at least your bearing; and I was tempted, at first, to rip it from the ground and stop its growing. But when I touched it, the heft of it under my hand said "let go." It teetered back and forth, then, uncentered, off-balanced by my touch. And I could see what a lot of work it was to be so heavy and brown, like an unlit torch leaning on the air.

The only time you are revealed is when something wounds you and a bit of cotton heart slips out, carried away on an indifferent breeze before there is even time to say: There it is! There is a sliver of the soft self. The gentle self that can never be seen except as it is moving away.