

PHILIP BROOKS

Lighthouse

The keeper's a liar.
He tells me:
"Steer away!"
Next I find
he himself hasn't
steered away.
He's steered *ho*.
Or whatever he's likely to call it
being that he's
a counterfeit seaman.
It's his wife
who draws
all the ships.
Dazzling as a sunflower,
she thinks it's funny
to shut off the light
at the worst moments.
He lets her.
Thus, all the sinking and giggling.
I ask him why he lets her.
He shrugs,
then strikes a match and bids me
stare into the flame
until it burns
his thumb and finger.
Smoke wisps upward.
"See?" he demands.