**Ellie: An Inventory of Being**

I am Ellie.
I am twenty years old.
I am a student, but never a co-ed.
A girl, afraid to be a woman.

If I stand very tall I am 65 inches high.
I have blue eyes streaked with gray
And tarnished brown hair
That gets in them.

Sometimes I wear it in a bun
And I am Emily Dickinson or Louisa Alcott
Or in pigtails and play hopscotch
In front of Mellon Institute.
Or let it just hang,
And run down Chapel Hill anyway.

I am a student, and a lady, and a child;
Almost a woman, but always a girl.

I love rare steak and burnt potato chips.

I am older than Neenie,
Younger than Lea’
I love the smell of Arpege and mud flats.
I drink tea with lemon and sugar with coffee.
Daffodils laugh, but blue-bells depress me.
I’m afraid of trolls.

I like raisins with oatmeal, and in the sun.
I work the best under pressure.
I like shiny fingernails and jazz, but
I hate Altman’s and mini-skirts.
I like small rooms lined with book, and braided rugs, and
Pillows, because I like to sit on the floor.

I like fountain pens and brown notebooks and blue ink and
I don’t believe in god, but I don’t tell
Anyone anymore,
And my children will go to church,
Because I love Christmas.

I love pearls.
I like garnets better than rubies,
And topaz more than diamonds.
But someday I want a diamond,
And a gold band
Forever.

But not just now.

Someday I want a girl named Jeannie and a
Boy named Mike –
But they’ll have to wait,
Because I want to be a person first.

Subject to change.

I believe that women are more than equal,
But keep quiet about it.
I know that there are 435 members of the House of Representatives
But I don’t understand why more of them
Aren’t Negroes and women.

Rachel Carson and Margaret Chase Smith
Were my high school ideals.
Now I’d add (quietly) Jean Kerr.

I’m an anti-feminist.
I love to travel alone.

I’m crazy about noodles and tuna fish
And pizza with pepperoni and Jello.
I hate clutter unless it’s books.

I love cozy slippers and lacy underwear
And going barefoot in the mud.
I make spaghetti in a popcorn popper, and
Always add paprika.
I am in love with chipmunks, pigeons, and
4 x 6 envelopes.
I read Dickens and Ferlinghetti.

I love wind and rain and snowmen,
And Baroque music and Barbara Streisand,
Even if she’s trite.
And I don’t like earrings or hairspray
Or soap operas and I adore commercials.

I love fireplaces with real fires,
And front porches with creaky swings
And noisy typewriters.

I like strawberry milkshakes and frosted lipsticks.
I’d like to be cultured, but love WABC
And I daydream at the symphony.

I love to get dressed up,
But I don’t waste time doing it.
I hate alarm clocks and television sets
But I couldn’t live without them.

I’d rather walk than ride
But I’ll drive anywhere.
I’m honest to a proudly-self conscious fault,
And I’m corrupt to a deeper meaning.
I wish sex were leagal –
But I went through a phase
Of wishing human sacrifice were too.

I don’t want to grow up
But I’m scared to stay young.

I eat too much, sometimes,
And talk too much, often,
And wish I could sleep too much, always.

If the world were a stage
I’d feel more comfortable in it.

I’m a loner, but I love being lonely.
I’m a conformist, except when I think.
I have horrible nightmares, and wild daydreams,
And I couldn’t live without either.

I spend too much money on velvet hair ribbons
And funny cards and books of plays.
Hamlet and Antigone are my ideals, but
Creon and I are one.

I think too fast.
I hate grease paint, but I love crowds.

I love Degas, but I don’t think I like
Horses or ballet.
I’ve always wanted to be the first woman president,
And a marine biologist,
And literary lioness,
And an archaeologist
But I’m allergic to dust.

I don’t want anyone to understand me,
But people think they do
And they’re probably right.

If I were rich the first place I’d go
Would be Scotland.
The second would be Stratford
And the third would be Disneyland.

I need someone to need me
Because then I need them too.
I’m a deadly realist,
But I pretend to be idealistic.
I used to think there was no such thing as love,
Now I’m not so sure.

I never want to go to the moon,
But I’d love to see penguins.
I’ve always felt that horses
Were incomplete zebras.

I’m funny
But most of the time it’s intentional.

I get migraine headaches.

I either love or hate October and March;
I haven’t decided yet.
I like men who know that
Women are people too,
And I hate crew cuts and red hair.

I’m a drama major because there are only five of us.
I support the minority, but
If I were Jewish, I’d be a conservative.
If I were a Democrat, I’d be liberal.
I’m in favour of staying in Viet Nam
But I hate war.

I may be in love
And it scares me,
But he doesn’t.

I love to see the sunrise,
But I hate to get up in the morning.
I’m perennially frustrated
Because I can’t know everything,
And I’m annually concerned about self.

My name is Ellie
And this is 1967.

-Eleanor Wait