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Now, Old Boat

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Now, Old Boat

Not yet ready for the breakers' yard,
just worn out and faltering, a bit
off-course: the compass can yet be trued,
hull shored up, baggy sails re-cut,
engine tuned. Perhaps a different
skipper, skillful at reading the charts

by which she steers past rocks, shoals,
the frowning cliffs, into a narrow
anchorage quiet under stars. She'll know
what this old boat wants—to tuck
into a silent cove where evergreens
stand watch, no surprises—

until morning's northerly coasts
down a turn of season, and light
hauls up another day from the sea.
The call of the next horizon,
and the next, and the next.

About the title:

In Gordon Bok's story-song "Saben the Woodfitter," (on "North Wind Clearing," Folk-Legacy Records.), Saben bargains with his tired old boat to *just hold yourself together long enough to reach the shore.*