

"Cocktails"

A cocktail can be many things,
Or so says Webster (1934 unabridged edition)

"A horse with its tail docked
To resemble or suggest a rooster's tail"

"The feathered, posterior appendage
Of a male chicken."

"A person passing for a gentleman,
But underbred" (as one named Kelly?)

"An appetizer of raw oysters, clams,
Crabmeat, shrimp, lobster, or the like"
Served in or with a sauce,

"With catsup, lime or lemon juice,
And tabasco or other peppery seasoning"

"A kind of cloud, the cirrus;

That presages rain;

"A tip-tailed beetle of elongate shape"

"A short drink, iced, of spirituous
Liquor, well mixed
With flavoring ingredients"

But, all things accounted for,
Only the last needs recognition,
For such a "cocktail"

Properly envisioned, in rightful
Setting, and given its social due
Is an "Open Sesame" to love and
happiness

For kindred souls, whose minds
Are bridged by understanding.

A cocktail is clasped hands,
A window open to the spirit —
Or — an opener of windows.

Through which we view

The world. A cocktail is the

Warmth of human kindness

Seen, felt, and understood,

That says, "I'm growing to love you"

And in so saying, fills

The heart to bursting, and

Soaring, carries it to heights

Before undreamed of —

A cocktail is a voice
 That's music just to hear
 That speaks poetic language
 And, over the magic of the telephone,
 Says, "How about a late break

Tonight — for relaxation?"
 A voice that, in the break
 Transforms a face till it's
 Illumed with Heaven's own light.
 A voice that tantalizes, captivates,
 Entrances and, in a whirlwind
 Of excitement and affection,
 Fills horizons till all else is gone
 And only you, you, you, you two, are there.
 A cocktail is adventures beckoning
 The call of "Faraway Places and
 Strange Sounding Names."
 Of nights under the stars
 Of steamy air, perspiring crowds,
 And cool, crisp, desert mornings;

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Of worms, insects and "belly flowers"
Little kittens, full of trust.

A cocktail is the medium
Of love that grows and warms
And draws together
Endlessly and forever
So long as lives may last.

A cocktail can be many, many,
things, or
So says Webster (1934 edition)
May the Gods of all the Universe
Grant that it may be
These things — all of them — to us.

June 3, 1965
Carl — to Patricia.