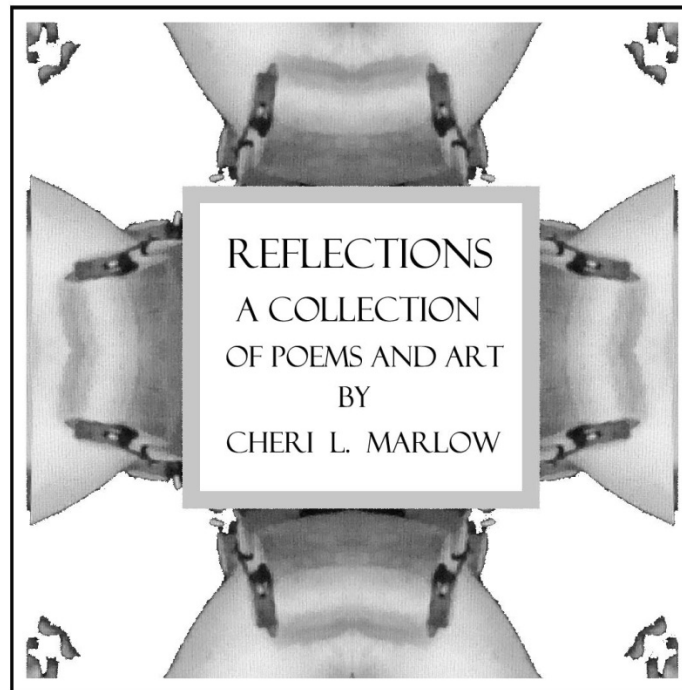
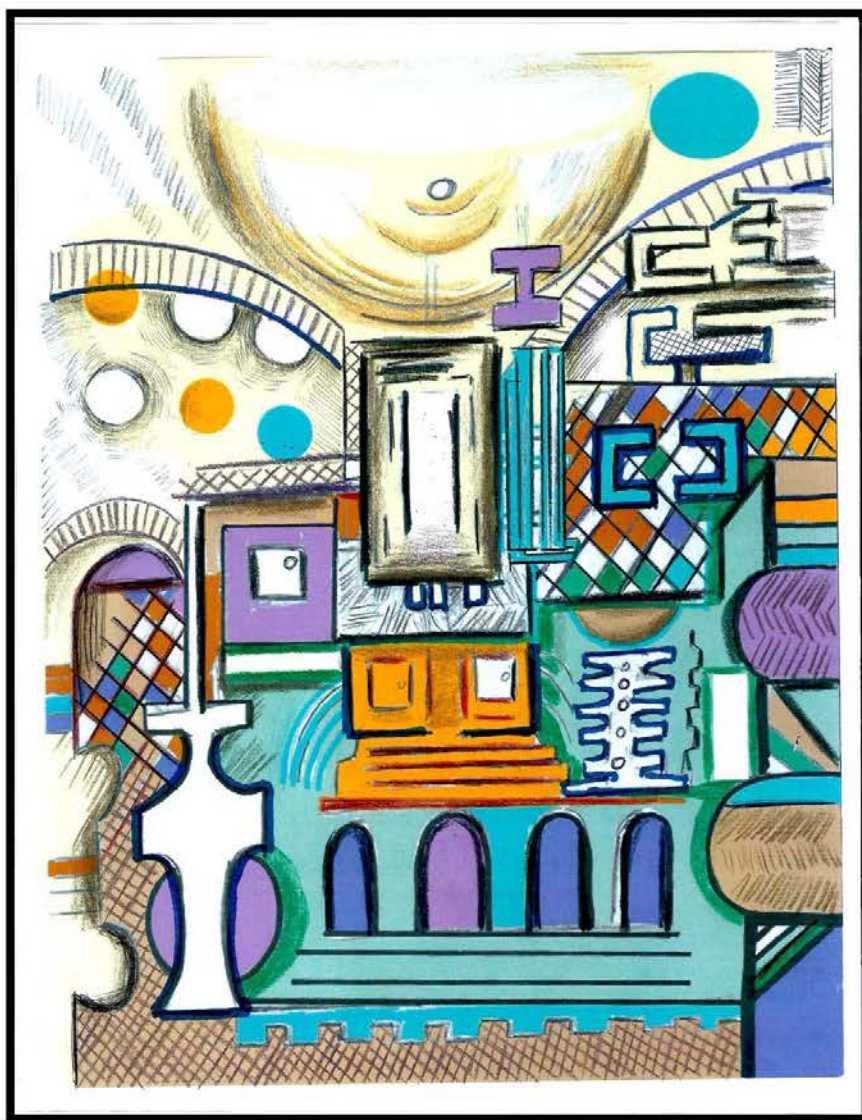


REFLECTIONS
A COLLECTION
OF POEMS AND ART
BY CHERI L. MARLOW







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ADVICE

They say, "you are all old now, and please don't chatter.

You are irrelevant now,

and can't say anything that can matter.

We are in a new day,

and have chosen such a better way.

There is nothing you can say that can matter.

So keep quiet now and stop all that unnecessary chatter."

We will not be silent anymore,

for we're close to heaven's door.

We will continue to speak not chatter

about the really important things in life that matter.

ALL IN A DAY

She leaped over the great fence,
landing in a lush green field of sweet clover.
Leaving the confinement of the dark night behind,
she was now free to roam the never ending fields.

As the sun was high overhead, she paused to rest.
Kneeling down in the comfort of the green blanket of clover
she dozed lazily, as huge round clouds drifted by unnoticed.

Necessity calls for work to be done.
Laboring for hours pulling a heavy weight
until every bone and sinew was crying out for mercy,
she fulfilled her duty.

As the sun hung low on the horizon,
slowly she trudged to her place of the rest,
dreaming of the Dawn.

ANONYMOUS

She did not walk in beauty like the night.

She trudged through the rain,

sleet and snow to a boring job.

Day after day, walking so fast

to beat the train, she raced to work.

Tolerated but not respected, she sorted the lives

in different stacks on her desk.

The young, the old, all with problems untold

were placed in the proper slot.

Reduce to a number,not a name,

God's greatest creations all look the same.

They never noticed her walking in the halls.

They were dressed in white

fixing all the problems in their sight.

How many are there just like she,... who go unnoticed?

Countless is the number who in their quest,

receive no acclaim when they do their best.

AT LAST

There was so much distance,
and I put up so much resistance.
It seemed the more I tried,
my every hope was denied.
I was so far from where you are.
Then you heard my heart,
my own special song.
A song that had been silent for so long.
Together our hopes will reach above the skies.
There is nothing to us that can be denied.

AS A CHILD

We did not have many material things,
but because we lived on a farm, we ate like kings.
No shortage of food was there for me.
I was welcome to eat anything that I could see.
No portion control, no measured size,
was put on the delicious food that was before my eyes.
Food portions of seconds and thirds sometimes more,
even if secondhand clothes I wore.
How very fortunate a child was I,
To be grateful and thankful,..... I didn't even try.
It was just the way things were for me.
I just thought that's the way things ought to be.
You have to be older to realize and contemplate
the kind of things that make life really great.

AT THE DANCE

We came to the dance wearing the same
shocking yellow color of dress.

Your dress was adorned with ruffles and a bell shaped skirt,
and mine, a sorry tattered garment of no distinction.

They sing praises of your beauty.

They gently and tenderly care for your well-being.

They feed and nurture you.

I.....they despise. They crush me and tear at my body

“
with cruel hands. Poison her,” they cry!
“ Obliterate her from the land.”

I do not know why I exist to be treated so cruelly.

Maybe someday in the far future,
they will see my value and let me live.

Till then, my Spirit runs strong and deep. I will survive!

Thorny protection has been given to me. I will survive!

My children will fly on the wind across the earth.

They need no special care.

For deep within them lies the destiny of our race.



AT THE LAKE

In black and white the trees were silhouetted against the sky,
with light snow flurries gently drifting by.

They stood together looking at the silver lake,
thinking of all the future plans they could make.

He was tall and strong in his uniform standing there.

She stood beside him,..... her long blonde hair
reaching past the shoulders of her coat.

They talked of all the letters that each of them had wrote.

So many things that happened in the months that had passed.

But,..... now they were here alone at last.

They were dreaming together of a better day.

They were thinking each alone of the proper way,
to express how in their hearts they really felt inside.

How could they tell each other and forget their pride,
of thoughts that were so pure and true.

Each felt so passionately thoughts that they alone knew.

As they looked down at the shore, they found a
little lost toy boat and wondered more.

He had been to so many faraway places,
and she had seen so many young and handsome faces.

Each of them in their own way
had come to the same resolution that day.

How do you make the decision that will change your life?

How do you decide to become man and wife?

They stood there holding hands as they looked out on the lake.

Forever together was a decision they would make.

AT THE LAKE
THREE SNOW MEN

The war had ended and he finally came home.

All the longing and worry vanished

as she was no longer alone.

Their lives were as happy as can be.

In the Spring there would be three.

Years passed quickly by

and they never thought to ask why

they were truly blessed.

When they were young they could never have

guessed such joy and happiness could really be

a part of their lives, because they could not see

beyond the current problems they faced in life,

that somehow they could overcome all the strife.

Plans and dreams they had made,

with each decision so carefully weighed.

Over the years they watched their family grow.
When they were young there was no way to know
the joy of raising four children could bring.
It is the pure type of joy that only poets can sing.
A boy and three girls would change their world with time.
No one could imagine, or bring to mind
the adventures this family had made
because the mother and father had stayed
in love holding fast..... a family held together
and at last..... soft and cuddly toys
were replaced when his beautiful little daughters.....
were now interested in tall handsome boys.
Their son was a fine young man
who in any situation could stand up and say
“I will choose the right way.”

Now grandparents were they, watching their grandchildren play.

It was at the time of Christmas when they visit here.

He held this three-year-old granddaughter near.

A storybook to her he read.

She was so quiet not a word she said.

Before they left there was a gentle snow

that covered the bare ground.

Snow had fallen throughout the night without a single sound.

Opening the shades to greet the morning light,

the four grandchildren saw the most wonderful sight!

A wonderland of beauty did appear,

bringing smiles to all who could see it very clear.

A view of dazzling beauty was just outside.

The view was fantastic as they looked from side to side.

The trees were flocked with a lovely snow.

It was the kind of snow you only see on a Christmas card when you go
to find a seasons greeting to send all your relatives and friends
that you hold dear at the Christmas time of year.

The snow kept falling raising high,
and as the morning hours passed by, they could no longer wait.

The children had to rush out before it was too late,
for in the afternoon they would have to go
back to their home where there wasn't any snow.

The old couple watch the four grandchildren pile the snow so high..
as the hours quickly went by.

Soon the time came for them to go.

When they would return no one could know.

Now standing in the yard ,..... straight and tall
where in all the years.... never at all
stood three snowmen; one short, one medium, and one tall.
After the grandchildren had left to go back to their home
the old couple could look out and see
the three snowmen standing by a tree,
with these times of joy to be locked in their memory.

AT TWILIGHT

“Am I my brother’s keeper ?” He thought as he walked
down the muddy ruts of the unpaved road.

He walked past doorways filled with tear stained cheeks
and dark eyes watching his every move.

As he walked, he smelled the cooking pots
pungent odors he could not identify.

Nothing smelled like home.

He walked past the pockmarked faces of houses
that had been abused. No flowers were planted
in the empty flower boxes. Chattering seemed to come
on the wind with sounds that make no sense.

His shoulders were stooped by the heavy pack
on his back carrying the essentials for survival.

Day after day, week after week, and month after month
the routine was monotonously the same.

One sharp loud crack from a window high above
pierced his beating heart.

Crumbling to the ground
with smeared visions before his eyes
he dropped to his knees.

BEAUTIFUL SOUND

My heart feels so much joy when he sings,
to my soul new revelations he brings.

This man from a faraway land,
seems to with his beautiful voice..... take my hand,
and lead me to a place of peace so far away.

It is a place I want to forever stay.

I know he is singing of love ,..... although his words
I do not understand.

I imagine he is walking alone on the sand.

The gentle inflection he puts
on each and every word he sings,
so much joy to my heart brings.

BROKEN

I hear a flute playing in the distant night.

Next comes his singing in an Italian voice.

He sings of having no choice.

Alone and struggling is he,

as he searches ever more for me.

Gone are the days, and in so many ways

he searches for his only love.

No help seems to come from above.

We are more than oceans apart.

There is no way to heal a broken heart.

BY DESIGN

In every life there is a season,
when we don't understand the reason
for our destiny on this earth.
It is difficult for us to see our worth.
If we only take the time, to look for ways
to be kind, we will find our own special place.
Each life has its own special place.
Move forward now there is no time to waste.

CHANGE

There are so many tears
that go on for endless years.
When will somebody finally say
“ We going to change things today! “
It’s time to finally start
to change all the hate;
to change their heart.
Tomorrow starts a brand-new day.
Let’s hope somebody finds a solution,
we pray.

CHANTING

In the twilight hour I heard the monks chanting
in the small chapel on the hill.

Now many years have passed,
but the memory of them chanting lasts still.

Their voices in perfect harmony,
were speaking directly to me.

Their beautiful voices came drifting on the wind.

Were they asking for mercy
on all of those who have sinned?

What the specific meaning
of their words were, I do not know.

But even so, I am very aware their beautiful voices
came with a real love and care
for our precious Lord above.

Their voices sang of His enduring love.

What a special gift their chanting was for me.

The sound of their voices in perfect harmony
entered my heart and allowed me to see
through His passion He gave His life to save me.

CHILD

Who will look out for this motherless child?

Who will be so careful, and who will protect this little one?

Who will be the one choosing which lullabies to be sung?

Who will look out for this fatherless child?

Who will teach him not to be wild?

Who will teach them to be filled with grace?

Who will teach them they come from a noble race?

Who will keep them safe and warm?

Who will protect them from the storm?

Lost and alone these little children will be,
when no one speaks up for them, not even me.

CHOICE

No sunshine will I ever see.

No one will ever hold and comfort me.

No colors so beautiful and bright,
no shining stars will I see in the night.

No one will ever see me smile,
I'll be gone from this earth in just a little while.

From me you'll hear no laughter ringing,
you'll never hear my beautiful voice singing.

I will never laugh and play
on a beautiful Summer's day.

No joyful sounds will I ever hear.

No one will ever hold me so close and dear.

No delicious foods will I ever taste,
for soon of me, there will be no trace.

I am only a little baby in the womb.

My mother's choice, was to make it my tomb.

COMPELLING SOUND

She was a lovely dark-haired young woman in a dark rob,
standing at Sunday morning service
in the small chapel on the hill.

For a few moments everything was so quiet and still.

She began singing in Latin without accompaniment,
of all His magnificence,and as her words began to unfold,
I was immediately struck by emotions untold.

So pure was her singing sound,
there was no one like her on this earth to be found.

I was caught up in a wonderful embrace
of His everlasting grace.

So compelling was the sound of her voice,
I simply had no other choice
than to be drawn to Him in this humble place,
as she sang of His everlasting grace.

I looked at other people standing there,
and I saw on each and every face
they were also so amazed at
her voice's pure and wonderful sound.
I could see I was not the only one who had found
a message so pure and yet so strong,
it would last for me a lifetime long.
It was as if I was hearing an Angel sing.
I wonder if she could ever understand
the grace to others she would bring.

CONTRAST

He stood silently in his dusty yellow coat ,
his large frame silhouetted against the dark sky.
He watched her sleek red body across the street
shining under a street light.

His voice was deep gravelly. All day he labored in the sun,
and now at last, he was resting.
He slept under the stars. He was pelted
by the wind and the rain.

She was pampered and polished till she sparkled.
She was protected from the rain.

No one was singing his praises. No one would polish his skin.
He was a beast of burden, with no heart within.

She was special. She was adorned.
Everyone admired her sleek style.
She was never ignored.

CONVERSATION

We met under a street light on a night dark and clear

“what price for your soul, my dear?” he asked.

His small frame and smiling face gave me no cause for concern.

His twinkling eyes in the light, sparkled in the black velvet night.

“I do not know,” I jested, for what price he had requested
was not something I thought about.

“Well let’s see,” I replied, “Lots of money, wealth untold
and perhaps tons of gold,”

“And by the way, that’s just the start,
for when I consider with all my heart,

it must be quite a price you see

for the task you have asked of me.”

“Well my dear, let’s settle it here.

I have a quota to make, and many souls to take
for my boss is a demanding master,” he stated.

“Well, let’s see,” I spoke, talking much faster.

“Money is not enough alone to take my soul with you
in the agreement I would make.

Loads of friends, happiness, and good cheer all around,
joyful experiences that are found
in overwhelming abundance I should need,” I replied.

“Never being left in the cold and never looking
in a mirror seeing an old face staring back at me
would have to be on the list you see.”

He stated, "You keep coming up with more and more suggestions.
I haven't got all night to listen to you ramble
if you want all those things, you are going to have to gamble."

"Well you see," I stated, "when I make a big decision,
I like to ponder. Because later on I might wonder
what better deal I could've made."

"Goodbye young lady," he did say, "I have no time to waste
the night. If I don't get many souls you see,
it will be very bad for me!
It was just my luck to find
a woman who couldn't make up her mind."

So I lost the chance for riches untold
not because I'm brave or bold,
but because my soul is very dear to me.





DAFFODILLS

I hurried by, never noticing the splash of color
singing in the sunshine.

I hurried by, never seeing the delicate lines of the pedals
strong against the dark leaves.

I hurried by, unaware of the most
glorious gift of Spring.

I hurried by.

On a gray day drizzle makes no sound
as it quenches the thirsty earth.

The quiet is a pause to let the earth
relax and rest for a moment.

DANCE

He sat in his old easy chair by the fire burning bright.
It was late in the evening on the cold winters night.
He watched his little girl dance.

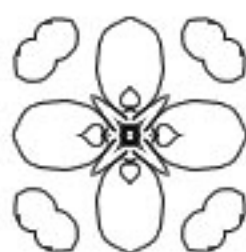
She was a tiny little child not yet three
as she danced to the music, she never saw me.
Her daddy saw her sway and twirl,
this lovely, graceful little girl.
He watched his little girl dance.

When she was eight years old, she danced
with other little girls dressed in sparkling clothes.
They were dancing and twirling
to the rhythm of the music in three rows.
He watched his little girl dance.

It was a joyous celebration to which
all the relatives and friends had come.
In all the crowd there was not one
face that was not smiling with delight.
The party went on all throughout the night.
In the arms of a tall and handsome young man,
she was tightly held as they swayed
in rhythm to the music that was played.
Her dress was the color of the purest snow.
Soon off into the night the two of them would go.
He watched his little girl dance.

DANCING

I love to see the summer breeze
russell the leaves of my backyard trees.
These trees usually stand so quiet and still,
as they decorate the side of the hill.
Yet,... when the summer breeze comes calling
these trees answer the longing
not to be still, but to dance.
Sometimes you have to be watching
and catch in a glance
the movement of a single branch,
to see a tree dance.
Most of the time we never take the time to see
the graceful dancing of a tree.





DAWN

When you are trapped in a situation difficult to endure,

wait for the Dawn.....

When there seems to be no way out,

wait for the Dawn.....

Through thunder and rain, racked with pain,

I wait for the Dawn.

AT THE END OF THE DAY

In the dark and deep before I sleep,

I find a quiet solitude.

A place of rest to digest

the happenings of my day awaits me here.

Safe and warm away from harm, I close my eyes

to sleep, dreaming of the deep embers of the fireplace.

The dark warm red embers glow filling my soul with

a compassion for all the hurting world.

DEMONS

They came like locusts blackening the sky. Their dread black form to crush the earth below.

We could not run.... We could not cry..... We stood alone against them, prepared to die.

Clothed in courage alone, we faced their massive form.

From Hell fires deep,..... they scorched the earth.

The sword of heaven struck their hearts alone.

Screaming..... they dropped from the sky.

This is not the day that we shall die.

DECEPTION

In dark secret places, hide all the evidence and traces,
of tricky deeds done in the middle night,
to obscure and obliterate the truth
which could be uncovered in the light.
Operatives watching and keeping track,
their number is enormous with no lack
of technical expertise,
their goal of information to obscure and not to release.
Their work never seems to cease.
Look into their faces and see their real pride
for all the messages they can cleverly hide.
They are skulking in the dark,
in clandestine meetings in a park.
Critical data passes from side to side,
and is instantaneously is distributed worldwide.

Such a massive deception comes from a single man,
who felt rejection.

To tell the truth, this is only my speculation.

I do not really know his true intention.

Money shoots digitally from place to place.

It moves at such a lightning pace.

At this time the world never knew

how much damage one single man could do.

Was he right or was he wrong?

To answer this question will take a time very long.

DESTINATION

Either man or woman what difference does it make?
When my life is over there will only be my soul to take.
They will come for me, but what will my destination be?
Will it be Heaven or will it be Hell,
only time will tell.

When I at last stand before God on Judgment Day,
will I have the courage and sense to pray?
Will I stand there alone?
Will I be ready for my sins to atone?
I believe no one else will be at my side.
Even though I have good friends scattered far and wide.
I will be on my own journey to go.
Where it will end, I pray I know.
If I can now choose Heaven or Hell,
there are so many reasons to consider
to you now I will tell.

Hell is a place of confusion and great pain.

The suffering goes on again and again.

There is no place of peace and rest.

In Hell I will not be honored as a special guest.

No water will be given to quench my burning thirst.

No relief will be given and what is worst

I'll be left alone in darkness so very deep,

I'll never awake from the nightmarish sleep.

No joy in that place will I find,

where in a place no one to me will ever be kind.

Let me consider Heaven as my destination to go.

There will be everlasting peace there, I truly know.

I will be loved and cherished by God who made me in love.

There will be happiness in the place we call Heaven above.

I will worship and honor Him who gave me my soul.

To reach heaven is my most earnest goal.

DESTINY

Are we the sum total of what we see, hear,
touch, taste, and feel that helps us determine
what is fantasy or real?

Is it in our experiences, from which we take
the power to life's decisions make?

Or is it from something more in us deep inside
that gives us the ability and the pride
to form our own special destiny?

This is a question that bothers me.

Have we been placed on this earth
for a specific purpose and plan?

Is there a special program
for each child, woman, and man?

To consider the answer, I can only try
to do the best that I can.

Is our life's destiny within our control,
as through life's challenges we go?

DIRECTION

People of prestige, possession, and great power
have seized the hour
to change the most basic values of our land.
When will we the common people stand up
for our freedom each and every day.
Those in great power no longer looked for any single way,
to bring back our nation to the days
when we led all the nations of the earth
to a better life by following values of true worth.
Freedom is a gift so very rare.
It is given to people who take the time to care
what direction their nation will go.
When the silent majority no longer cares
what the future of our nation will be,
it is very difficult a bright future to see.



DREAMING

As I lay tucked in my bed,
visions of warm summer days drift through my head.
Days splashing in the water fun,
with marshmallows roasting in the fire well done,
these are the visions that come to me.
These are the visions that I can clearly see.
White fluffy clouds drifting by,
I see in the most beautiful cerulean blue sky.
I run and a play with my friends all day,
there are not enough words to say
how happy these days seem to be.
All of these days are locked away in my memory.

EASY

His furrowed face turned back over his shoulder
as if to say,

“did you think it was going to be easy?”

His scraggly hair and uneven kept beard
matched his rumpled clothes
as he stared at her with hollow eyes.

“Did you think it was going to be easy?” He said.

A life worn thin with no respect within,
framed his shoulders as he turned his head away.

“No, I did not think it would be easy,

With tears and pain through all the years
of shattered schemes and broken dreams
we both struggled each day.

“I did not think it would be easy.” she said.

ELECTION DAY

They are all dressed so neatly,
and they all smile so sweetly.

Vote for me they say,
on the next election day.

I am for those who labor in factories,
and for those who labor on the farm.

I will keep our nation safe from terror,
and free from all harm.

I'm not for endless foreign wars,
I'll be sure as a nation we can save more.

I am strongly for the middle class.

I am the only one who is for prosperity that will last.

If you want someone honest, that's really me!

Things will improve economically, you will see.

Everyone will get a big pay raise.

There will be happy and joyful days.

Even though you earn more ,
your working hours will be less.

I'll really change Washington,
and get rid of the bureaucratic mess.

We won't have to worry about climate change,
everything will be just fine.

I'll make sure every polluter is kept in line.

I'm for every good environmental cause.

I'll only propose sensible and effective laws.

I'll make sure the superrich share their wealth.

All political decisions will be so transparent,
there will be no stealth,

in the decisions we will make
that will be the best for your sake.

Education and healthcare will be almost free!

Be sure you mark your ballot for me.

I'm not like those others you see.

I'm really honest! You really need to elect me.

Vote for me, I'm for the poor and not for the rich.

You will get your every single desire and wish.

If you want more freedom to play,

be sure and vote for me on election day!

All of my election promises I will keep.

They are all typed up in our literature so neat.

All of your cares will go away,

if you get out and vote for me on election day.

EYES

Whether we look at life through eyes of love ,
or eyes of hate
will often decide our fate.

Realize now and take
time to act now before it's too late.

Eyes of love see the beauty that was once there,
even though decades have passed marked
with stress and great wear.

Eyes of hate see something that is so pure and fine,
and will never take the time
to see the real beauty within shine.





Eyes of love recognize the smallest detail, In
something so common as a dandelion
or a perfectly turned sail.

Eyes of pride will look from side to side,
and see nothing of interest
though nature simple treasures are scattered
on the landscape far and wide.

Eyes of anger will only see
how you have offended me.

Eyes of forgiveness will forever give
a reason for all of us to live.

FAMILY

I came from a wealthy family.

We had a happy home.

I was never alone. We ate the best
and most delicious food.

My mother was a wonderful cook.

She never used a recipe from a book.

I came from a wealthy family.

My father worked all day in the
burning sun, in the fields
working so hard to get the best yields.
He was up before dawn doing the milking.
Whether or not the weather was fair
he was always there for the animals in his care.
I came from a wealthy family.

I was always warm. I was never cold.

Although we had nothing that was gold,
we held together in that time and place.

They taught me to believe.

They taught me to receive
the most gracious blessing.

I came from a wealthy family.

We had no indoor plumbing.

So many would say we had nothing.

Our landlord was a kindly man and friend,
his daughter's outgrown clothes to me would send.
I came from a wealthy family.

My father was a man with an eighth grade education
who knew the power of knowledge.

He saved \$2000 each for my brother
and me to go to college.

I came from a wealthy family.

When my father passed away the money was spent
to pay the rent.

The Inheritance he left was far greater
than any amount of money.

He left a spirit of determination.

When you are so unsure of your destination
you move through the dark days
and with hard work find ways
to fulfill your destiny.

I came from a wealthy family.

There are so many children today
who live in an unhappy home.
They are left all alone
to face the problems of their life.
They have no guidance to help relieve their strife.
The homes they come from can be poor or rich
yet there is no harmony for them
to fulfill their wish
to be loved and cared for;
to be rescued and to stay alive.
They have no one to help them survive.
I look back at my life and I can clearly see
what a blessing my wealthy family was for me.

FORGOTTEN PLACE

Violence in the night, and there's no help in sight.

Violence in the night, and there's no help in sight.

Nothing in this neighborhood is held dear.

No one to help is near.

In a place forgotten and lost, we can't imagine the cost,
when all humanity and kindness are lost.

FORWARD

Set sail today to fulfill your dream,
no matter how difficult it may seem.

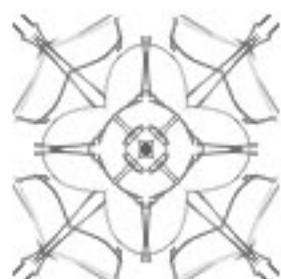
Move forward with pride to accomplish
what you know deep inside
is valid and true.

There are so many things that are positive
that you can do.

Use all your talents in the very best way,
to move forward each and every day
to find your own unique and special way.

Let nothing ever hold you back,
for there is nothing of importance that you lack.

Set your sail and stay on course
and never look behind,
true success comes from a positive state of mind.



FREE

I want to be free
without any care,
to feel the wind blow
through my hair.

I want to be new,
with wonderful things to do,
to make a difference somewhere.

I want to be young,
with every new song sung
to the music of life,
free from all strife.

I want to be free.

I want to become
who I was destined to be.

I want to be free.

Freedom

I will be a slave no more,
she thought as she stood on the muddy riverbank
looking at the distant shore
to freedom on the other side.

No matter what it takes,
even if my heart in 1 million pieces breaks,
I will be a slave no more.

Looking across the brown waters to the other side,
even if they chase me far and wide,
I will be a slave no more.

Though years pass, and my tears fall like the rain,
I will endure all pain
I will be a slave no more.

GONE

There are no words to console my broken heart.

I knew from the very start,

our lives in this moment would find

no earthly time

to bring peace and love

that comes from above.

So much emotion,..... so much love

with a passion so strong,

sometimes can't last very long.

I long for you to once more hold me so tight,

and take away all the loneliness of the night.

GRACE

For so many years I had no voice.

In so many ways I had no choice.

Then You came into my life.

You stayed with me through all the strife.

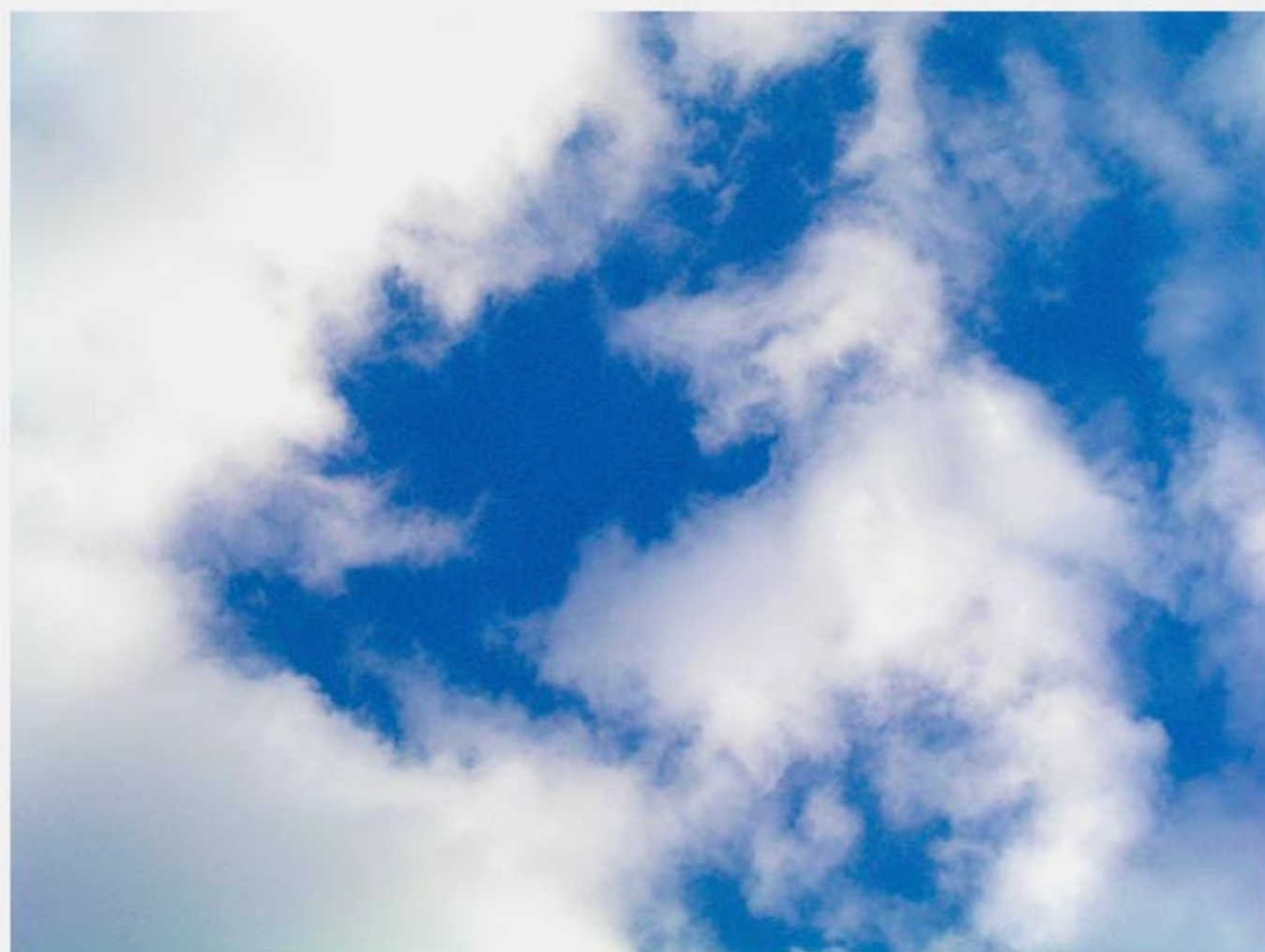
Now I know You are really here.

Your sacrifice was so dear.

You will not leave me alone in this place.

You save me by your grace.





GRATITUDE

"Thank you Lord for keeping me dry the day the hard rains came." I will say again,

" Thank you Lord for keeping me dry the day the hard rains came."

Though I did not have to go very far, I was fortunate to make it to a very safe place.

Of wind, hail, and storm, for me there was no trace.

"Thank you Lord for keeping me dry the day the hard rains came."

Just another day like any other gray day,

I thought the wind would soon blow the drifting clouds away.

First a patch of blue and then a patch of gray sky was coming my way.

Shafts of sunlight in the sky would break through the gray, as if to say

"don't worry about the clouds in your life,

they will soon blow away."

Strong and powerful the approaching Spring storm did come.

With it came a darkness that blots out the sun.

The wind so mightily did increase.

Next came small bits of hail, and at last a final release,
of large hail, winds and rain so strong,

I would have been drenched to the skin
if only moments I had stayed unprotected too long.

Yet,..... safely to my destination I did go.

Why am I so blessed, I do not know.

“Thank you Lord for keeping me dry, the day the hard rains came.

GRANDMA

“Things always change, and usually for the better,”

her grandma would say.

She made a little child’s hard life

tolerable in that small way.

She was a kindly small woman with long tied back white hair.

She always said the right thing to help

when no one else was there

to dry the child’s tears,

and she held her little granddaughter so reassuringly tight.

No longer was this child afraid of the dark at night.

Hurts would come and hurts would go,

there are so many things a little child doesn’t know.

How could she solve all the problems in her young life?

Solutions are particularly hard to come by

when there is no mother in sight.

There was no one to wipe away the tiny tears,

no one to care or even hears

all the problems that can beset a child so young.

There was no one to ever come

and kiss the small hurts away.

Thank God for a grandma who took the time to say

“things always change, and usually for the better.”

With a grandma like that, she learned

to withstand all the bad weather.

Grandma's don't stay on this earth very long.

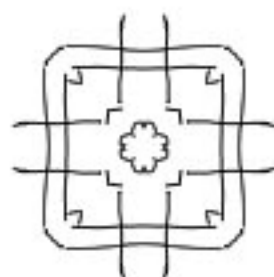
After a few years, her grandma was gone.

All of her long life, to the day she passed away

she would remember what as a small child

her grandma would say,

“things always change, and usually for the better.”







HAPPINESS

If I had money I'd buy happiness.

No worry would I have for my daily needs.

If I had money I'd buy happiness.

I would eat the most delicious food.

No one would be rude to me.

If I had money I'd buy happiness.

Every care would disappear. Everything I wanted
would be at my beck and call.

If I had money I'd buy happiness.

Oh..... But what would happen if I lost the money?

Would my friends stay true?

Would I enjoy the simple taste of cinnamon?

There must be more to finding happiness
than I can fathom.

INSPIRED

I put my pen to the paper,.... and the words so rapidly flow.

Where this inspiration comes from,..... I do not know.

Words so deeply felt, speaking of love and pain,.....

words of sunshine and everlasting rain,

It seems to me these words

are coming from a distant past.

I do not know how long this inspiration will last.

INVISIBLE CHAINS

When I was young they said to me,

“you are too young the world to change.

You have to have experience to right the wrongs,

and for morals to rearrange.

If all the world's problems you want to correct,

just wait and see what will be.”

I was held back by invisible chains.

As I grew older and my own opinions formed,

they told me bluntly, “you must conform.

Don't go against the grain,” they said,

“ if you want to keep your job

be quiet and accept the norm.”

I was held back by invisible chains.

When I grew older and became physically weak

they said, “don't worry about our changing morals today.

There is nothing of importance that you can say.”

I was held back by invisible chains.

It took a lifetime of experience for me to see

the only one with invisible chains holding me back

was me.

INVISIBLE PEOPLE

They didn't care his legs were twisted
and he walked with an uneven gait.
He pushed the five decker aluminum cart
with clanking wheels through the black swinging doors
with cracking paint to the stock room.

They didn't care because his small stature was blessed
with broad shoulders that could lift the heavy loads
for minimum wage. He stacked the cartons of tuna fish
5 feet high on the end cap of aisle 17.

They didn't care he never saw the bright and lovely
morning sun. His graveyard shift started
at 9 PM and ended at 5 AM.

He cared. He was always on time. He was never sick.
He was so grateful for his job.

They didn't care about the woman with her gray T-shirt
stretched tight across her swollen belly
as she pumped gas to fill her compact car.
The dull colored car had a chopped off back design
and rusting wheels.

They did not see the beautiful child within,
his sparkling eyes were closed as he sucked his thumb
in the safety of his mother's womb.
All they cared about was the number of votes
they could get by taking the right political position
never seeing the wreckage of the lives they left behind.

She cared for the life within her. For what she lacked
in the material world was nothing compared to the
opportunity to be a mother of this precious child. She cared.



JEWELS

Birds are like nature's tiny jewels.

They adorn so many things.

Birds adorned the trees, bushes and leaves,
they even adorned the lakes and the seas.

Birds are not bound by any man-made rules,
they fly forever free,
only very seldom seen by so many people like me.

Some birds are dressed in modest colors of
grays, brown's, and even white.

Other birds are as black as night.

Some birds are dressed in colors
of brilliant reds, blues, green and gold.

How many interesting stories
of their journeys could be told?



Flying from low to the ground to mountains high,
they drift on the wind currents in the sky.

Birds know no border or defined boundary,
for they fly over land and sea,
so seemingly effortlessly and so gracefully.

Did you ever wonder why only the birds can sing?

No other creature on earth
without special training, such joy can bring.

I have seen the geese flying so high.

How do they ever know
exactly where to go when Winter is neigh?

These are nature's treasures designed to fly so gracefully.

Now at last I am able to see,
what a wonderful place our earth is designed to be.

In so many simple ways,
small creatures of the earth give comfort,
and bring great pleasure to me.

JIM

He was a big man with a swarthy build
who worked all day in a cotton field.
No one cared he came from a noble race.
All he was told was to pick up the pace.
His heart had been shattered
like a crystal goblet broken, on a cold stone kitchen floor,
that could never be repaired
no matter how much someone cared
when his wife and child were sold for a token
of their precious worth.
He worked all day in the blazing sun.....
his dark skin glistening against the summer sky.
No one would see.
No one would care.
No one would hear him cry.
He was only 3/5 human.

THE CRYSTAL GOBLET

She had come to work in the big white house with a colonnade so tall that when she stood next to them she looked so small.

Her fragile little frame with chocolate colored skin did not reveal the inner terror that was within.

She had been bought because of her appearance to decorate the interior of the large white house as she served the guests such delectable delights.

“Take her around back to the kitchen” said the stocky blank eyed mistress, “and show her what is needed to be a successful servant in this great manor.”

She saw the separate kitchen building where all the cooking for those of importance was done.

“She looks so small,” the main cook said. Can she carry the heavy loads and do her work before she’s fed?”

“You’d better try your best” was the answer

“she was selected by the master.”

“These are the dishes all in their place. Be careful and don’t leave a trace of your fingerprints on their shining surface. Handle them with care; if you don’t want to find out where the unsuccessful servants go.

Crystal goblets all in a row lined the shelves of the pristine white cabinets lining the walls.

Their bell shaped curve’s opening gracefully up to receive the most delicious liquids.

Their stems were long and elegantly made ending in a fluted bottom trimmed with etched leaves.

The china was exquisitely designed with gold rims and flowers so lovely that they shined with any small amount of light.

The silverware glistened shining so bright it would illuminate the white lace covered dining room table at night.

“Set this tray with eight Crystal goblets,” she was ordered “and place them on the stand to be filled for the evening dinner.”

She picked up each goblet with so much care trying to protect it from any type of wear from her slender hands.

One by one she placed them so well in a line on the tray
until the very last goblet to her dismay
fell on the cold stone kitchen floor
shattering into 1000 pieces
to be restored nevermore.

JIM AT 36

He had been injured in an accident in the field,
with a heavy wagon that would not yield to the lever propping it up.
The wagon fell crushing him leaving him lame.
He was so proud and strong, a man who could work all day long
In the cotton fields was now left
to work around the yard.

He saw her standing there in a dress so fair.
Her slender body was silhouetted against the sky ,
as she gathered flowers for the dining room table.
She was the picture of his wife at 15.

Was this only a dream ,
a confusion of thoughts because of the summer heat?
He knew his wife and daughter of two years old
had been bought by a different master at auction.

So many years had passed and now it last
he was seeing an apparition of his wife so gentle and so fair,
standing there before him in the garden.

He had never seen her before, and continued to wonder even more
who was this lovely girl?

He could not speak for each time he tried
he became so weak he could not say a single word.

The lazy summer days moved ahead
into the twilight haze of early August.

At last he could stand it no more and
with his eyes downcast to the floor he asked this question.

"Who is your father child? I might have known him a long time ago."

Looking at this humble man, who attended the garden
with such a tender hand, she felt no fear speaking to him.

"I never knew my father" she said. "Mother told me many things about
him."

"If you could be so kind, please tell me more " ask the gardener.

"He and my mother were so happy and they loved me.

They would hold me close and play with me.

When all the work was done they would sit at night
and look at the stars and wonder at their beauty bright.

My father called me his little star."

A tiny tear begin to trace down her perfectly formed face.

"I have to go. You know well now I am not expected to waste time."

Weeks passed and with them came the golden days of Autumn.

The trees were brilliant in colors of reds and golds,
as the lame man and the girl met once again in the garden.

"Do you have a family she asked?

"Once," he said pausing for a moment lost in reflection.

"I had a beautiful wife and a daughter of two years old so dear.

They were taken away from here and sold at auction.

My little girl had a birthmark the shape of a star
that was just above her heart he continued.

I used to call her my little star."

The girl's expression changed to a gasp,
wondering if now at last she had found her father.

Ever so slowly she reached her collar and bent it back to reveal
the image of a star shaped birthmark.

JUDGEMENT

Do not judge a man by his size,
but rather whether or not he is ignorant or wise.
Do not judge a man by his proud name.
It may be the only factor in his fame.
Rather judge a man not by what you see,
but who he was divinely destined to be.





KINDS OF SNOW

There are different kinds of snow.

There is the kind of snow that falls at such a rapid pace,
driven by harsh north winds it stings my face.

This snow is blocking everything in sight,
as you try to reach your destination on a dreary Winters night.

Another kind of snow is the soft and gentle flocking snow.

It coats every tree branch where it may go.

This kind of snow makes such a lovely scene,
it seems to be a landscape in a beautiful dream.

There is the snow in Winter time that falls
so silently throughout the night, and has a texture so very fine.
It covers the ground in a brilliant color of the purest white,
and with the early morning streaming sunlight
sparkles like diamonds from above,
like a precious gift given with love.

We never know what kind of snow
will be wherever we may go.

Laura Bridgman

She was a child who could not see.

She was a child who could not speak.

She was a child who could not hear the voices so clear.

She could not taste nor could she smell.

Who was this child the world learned to know so well?

She lived in a time so long ago

in our nation from a place I do not know.

She learned to speak with her hands

with such eloquence that many people came

from far-off lands

to hear the messages from her hands.

Her teacher gave her words that were raised
to represent the meaning of objects and the phrase
of many things she held in her hands.
So intelligent and so bright..... she left behind
the world of endless night.

She spoke to us so loud and clear
of things important for us to hear
with only her hands to speak.....
she gave a powerful voice to the weak.

How is it that now we who can hear and see and
speak.....
have nothing of importance to say
about the poverty.....war.....and crime.....
that afflict our world in our time?

LEGACY

There once was a wealthy man,
who never wasted a single moment of his time
looking for anything that was divine.
Every earthly cuisine pleasure,
he sought out and tasted.
Nothing of pleasure to him was denied.
He was a man filled with pride.
Of land and treasure,
great amounts he had accumulated.
No one ever debated
how successful this man had become.
Yet,..... to help those less fortunate,
he never gave one
moment of his precious time.
Never once had he considered
those who would stand all day in line,
just to find a job to feed their family.

What treasures next he could acquire, was all he could see.

He had perfect vision, but could not see
the plight of the downtrodden in great poverty,
who lived all their lives in abject misery.

With his great wealth he could have given a gift
to those less fortunate, and to lift
their humble lives into a brighter day.

But this man was more inclined to play,
and squander his money in every silly way.

Why would he care about anything that was divine?

He simply never had the inclination or the time,
to set his mind on higher thoughts.

Instead he looked for and bought
every earthly object of pleasure.

This man from this earth is gone.

He simply didn't live very long.

All the treasures he had acquired have been scattered.

He never left anything on earth that really mattered.

LIBERTY

Over every land and rolling sea,
comes the heartfelt cry for liberty,
that every child, woman and man,
be aware they have come to steal our land.

Hold **fast to what is honorable and true**,
or else some day in the near future,
they will come to silence you.

Sing a song that will be full of honor and praise,
for all who gave their lives in the days
not so very long ago, fighting evil
that you and I were too young to know.

In each generation there comes a time,
when all is threatened you hold dear.

That time is rapidly closing in on us,
and is coming so very near.

Hold fast to what is honorable and true.

Hold fast to liberty and do the very best you can do.

LIFE

Every life has a story full of pain and glory.

Lost in the past of our memory, there are some things
we could not see that were so important but left undone.

The times we could speak to no one of
all the sadness in our life, the days of worry and strife.

We finally came through this precious thing called life
in spite of all the worry and strife.

Take a look at each day, and fervently pray
to find a way to make all of your broken dreams come true.

Know we finally came through able to find something new.

We were able to regain our strengths again and with that
knowledge came the everlasting song.

LISTENING TO THE OLD SONGS

As you are sleeping by my side,

my mind drifts far and wide.

I am listening to our old love song.

It has been so very, very long,

since these lovely words I have heard.

My heart and mind are drawn

to each and every word.

They are singing about love that is really true.

They are singing about me and you.

There are wonderful words

that say in so many ways,

we will stay in love all of our days.

These songs are about longing.

These songs are about belonging.

There is so much passion, there is so much love,

it must have been destined from above.

LOVE

In life there were so many important things I just could not see.
There were so many times when you came looking for me.
I was wandering lost and alone, with so many sins for which to atone.
You never gave up looking for me.
Even though I was so far away across the endless sea,
you were ever searching for me.
As I look up at the stars in the sky, I constantly ask why
you love me so.

FOREVER

As I lie in repose, my mind to your sweet memory goes.
There is no one on this earth who knows
how really dear you are to me.
If I should travel very far across the sea,
I will always come back and will always be at your side.
When love is truly pure, no matter what ever happens
true love cannot be not denied.

LOVER

He swept me away with his sparkling dark eyes and good looks.

He was the kind of lover you read about the storybooks.

His lines were so well rehearsed,

his words sounded like a great poetry and verse.

His face shone so bright, it lit up the night.

Never did I dream someone like him could love me.

When I was with him my soul did soar.

Who could imagine in a few weeks time, without a single sign,

I'd hear from him nevermore.

So I loved and lost, and I paid the cost,

but I still remember the day he swept me away.





MACHINES

Silently running

softly humming

hissing

clanking

earsplitting

scraping

squeaking

pumping

filling

speaking

hearing

recording

every sound

for miles around

storing

evaluating

calculating

investigating

seeing

Never once believing

Killing

saving lives

never once tries

to determine which one lives

constructing

sculpting

weighing

measuring

drilling

whirling

slicing

dicing

with complete accuracy

and precision

never making any decision

entertaining

music playing

videos playing

Never say how they feel

Never determining

what is important and real

moving

driving

flying

rolling

constantly going

from place to place

never leaving any trace

baking

stirring

simmering

cooking

cutting

embossing

never once embracing us

never making any unnecessary fuss

made of plastics, circuits, wires,
different metals, and steel
unable to feel
compassion that is so real
sewing
blowing
never experiencing joy or pain
never seeing the world after a Spring rain
placing things in a perfect line
keeping accurate time
never making any moral decision
never favoring any religion
Changing lives
scanning the skies
never striving to save
those who are of real value
and truly brave
or to learn
discarded on a trash heap to burn
machines





MARIAHA

She was a lass of 17 years, who approached life without any fears.

She had lost all that was precious and dear.

There was no close family left to be near,

as she approached her destiny.

Coming from a long forgotten race,

she sought to make a place to stand on her own alone.

She had no sin yet for which to atone.

What would be this young girl's fate?

Was the time not right; was it simply too late?

It is a tale of joy and misery, written on the

dusty old pages of a book on history.

A story left untold, about a young orphan girl

who nearly lost her soul as she went in search of her destiny.

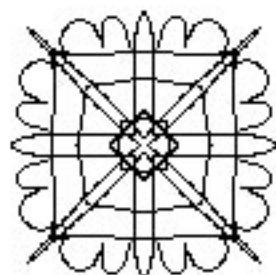
With not a penny to her name, she went from poverty to fame.

What is this miraculous story about?

This story is not in most people's memory there is no doubt.

She tilted her head back and looked at the sky,
what she was thinking I can only deny.
She knew the power of persuasion she held in the palm of her hand.
There would be many of men
who would be charmed by her, again and again.

From rags to silks she did wear, with perfumed flowers in her hair.
She was such a joy to see.
I watched her often, but she never looked at me.
I met her on a warm and gentle Summer day.
She had gone down to the edge of the stream to play.
As dark as a Raven was her long hair
flowing softly away from a face so pure and fair.
Graceful and slender of build was she,
so engrossed in splashing in the stream, she never noticed me.
The water did glisten on her skin.
I knew there must beat a carefree heart within.





It is a tale I must relate. On the merits of her character
there still remains much debate.

Who could have imagined what would be her fate.

So listen and stay a while

and you will find those whom she did beguile.

Mariaha was her name. Her name and the wind are called the same.

Like the wind she moved from place to place.

Like the wind she never left a trace.

But those who knew her will always remember well,

for they will have an amazing story to tell.

MEMORIAL DAY

Freedom isn't free. When I think of those who died for me,.....

I know freedom isn't free.

Born into a world on fire, as a baby I did not see

the men and women, young and old, who protected me.

Across the world from desert plains, mountains, jungles,

and to seas, they fought and died to keep me free.

Through the smoke filled haze of battle scarred days,

they fought to save me. What sacrifice they gave

I will never understand.

The red stained hills are now lush and green. They hold the unfulfilled

dreams and joys of those unseen.

What price they paid to save our land,

is lost in distant memories.

As my journey comes to an end, I know freedom isn't free.

When I think of those who died for me, I know freedom isn't free.

To save my soul he came to earth and died for me.

Freedom isn't free. When I think of who died for me,.....

I know freedom isn't free.

MUSIC OF THE WIND

Sometimes my mind drifts far away,
riding on the sound of a flute, caught up by the rhythm
of the sound leading me to places unknown.
Steady repetition in deep low keys drones along,
accompanied by the singing sound. Rich and deep,
the Master plays the melody of life.
Harmony joins in, completing the song.

MY REQUEST

Don't pick a casket for me so fine.

I don't plan to stay there too much time.

I've got a much better place to go.

This is something I truly know.

We are not a human body alone,

there is for my spirit a heavenly home.

Don't put the fancy marker on my grave,

instead remember the small lives I tried to save.

I'm not anything special on this earth.

I pray to God I had some small worth.

NIGHT SINGER

Strong and wonderful, his singing voice
carries on the wind.

His words touch me deep within.

He sings of love and death.

I am left waiting for his every breath.

There is so much love and pain,
as I hear him singing in the rain.

The words he sings come from deep in his heart.

Will I ever know, will I ever start
to understand his song.

BLUES

Some people sing the blues all night.

Some people sing the blues all night.

They got nobody to hold them tight in the middle of the night.

Some people just sit around and sing the blues all day

Some people just sit around and sing the blues all day.

They got nobody for them to pray.

Some people just listen to bad news all day.

Some people just listen to bad news all day.

No wonder all they can do is sing the blues.

OBSERVATIONS

She stood there with skin pure white looking down at me.

He stood beside her, his skin as dark as night.

Her arms were raised as if to adjust her golden hair.

His arms were outstretched to embrace her

as he silently stood there.

Who was this mortal who walked past them each day?

Did she have anything of importance to do or say?

She never noticed them as she passed by.

She never heard them weep or sigh

for all the pain they endured.

She never even thought of a single kind word,

to speak to them in sounds reassuring and low.

Racing off to her work she would go.

As the seasons passed by, she never asked why
there came such a striking change.

Their appearance would dramatically be rearranged.

From the youth of early Spring,

to the full beauty that the Summer of life brings,

they stood there strong and proud, never speaking out loud
of the glory the Autumn would bring.

In Winter stripped of all their glory and grace,

they still stood strong holding their place.

Mortals come and go on this earth.

Most of them never find their true worth.

She is still standing there in skin of pure white,

with him beside her dressed in a skin as dark as night.

OLD WOMAN

She never earned a single dime,
in the ways she spent her time.
She spent all her years
wiping away the tiny tears
of children left for death,
who struggle for each and every breath.
Old and wrinkled was she,
not the pleasant looking person we like to see.
No corporate accolade,
to this woman was ever made.
She is not on this earth anymore,
but for those who look, she opened a door.

ON AND ON

Sometimes there seems to be so much confusion,
there just doesn't seem to be any solution
to the problems of life.

All the tragedy and unhappiness we see,
never seems to even come near me.

Yet,..... I can only wonder

if I say nothing under

the fear of what people will say,

whether or not there will come a day

when things will ever change.

I am so weak and have no power to rearrange

the serious problems of this world.

All I can do is watch and see the most

precious among us hurled

into the abyss

where no one will ever see or miss

their essence.

PERFECT SOUND

In the still of the summer night,
through my open window comes drifting
the sound of a distant flute calling,
and I am drawn to, and falling into love
with the wonderful and rich sound.
At last perfect peace my restless soul has found.
I am covered and embraced
with a sense of joy all around.
A sound so clear and perfect
drifting through the night
reaches the depths of my heart and might
change my sad repose into a fresh new soul
that with confidence goes
forward to my true destiny.

PRECIOUS

There is a magical land where
neon colorful lights dance in the black velvet night sky.
It is a home where soaring eagles fly.
Crystal clear rivers teeming with fish run
through lush green meadows in the land of the midnight sun.
Birds of many kinds fly effortlessly through the crisp air.
It is a place so distant from where
most humans on earth live.
Yet,..... this land has so many wondrous treasures to give.
Billions of stars can be seen at night,
forming a canopy over a landscape that is dressed in white.
Huge trees of Evergreen of every kind,
decorate the landscape scene,
in a great variety of so many shades of green.
The icy ocean kisses its shores.
The more of this ocean you see, makes you wonder more.

The ocean contains even more kinds of sea life
that you can find listed in any book.

Everywhere you turn your head and look,
something very interesting will appear.

Things that are far away, and things that are so very near,
delight your eyes from morning till night.

At times everything seem to be bathed in a heavenly light.

You can see spectacular scenes,
some so magical that could only be found
in a fantastic Technicolor dream.

Majestic snow capped mountains so very high,
they seem to even touch the very top of the sky.

This place still remains the free animals domain.

It is a place where very few humans have come.

It holds magnificent treasures too vast to even measure.

For ages to come pristine this special place will be,
if we make a most conscious effort to see
a real gem of the earth
and at last recognize its true worth.

RAIN

Rain falls like precious tears from the sky,
landing on flowers and weeds and even tender young seeds.
It brings the awaiting earth below,
a life renewed and even so
it is a gift of immeasurable worth.

In early Spring when the scene is drab and gray,
the rains that fall change the landscape each day
and sometimes in only a very small way.

Before everything from Winter's sleep
was dull, dark and not very bright,
but sometimes when the rain falls gently on a Spring night,
in the morning you can barely see
the small changes happening on a single tree.

For the tree's dark branches which were stark and bare,
Now when I look carefully there,
the tiniest of buds are beginning to appear.

The time of rapid growing and change
is coming very near.

For years I worked at a frenetic pace,
going from place to place
as different jobs I had required.
Working day and night and often very tired,
I walked past the early Spring tree,
and would never even see
the miracle of life that was happening before me.
Each day the tiny tree buds would increase and grow.
It took me a lifetime to realize and know
these trees were quickly becoming
the smallest areas of bright green.
I have passed these trees often
and had never even seen
what I now know is so glorious to see.
From Winter's stark and bare dark branches,
comes life renewed in tiniest of bits brilliant green.
I now know it is one of the loveliest transformations
that I have ever seen.

REMEMBER ME

Do not forget me when you go

so far away across the sea.

For with you always in my heart, you will stay

even though you go so very far away.

Our love for each other

will transcend time and space.

Until you return and stand

beside me in this place.

RESTING PLACE

Once many years ago, I was hiking in the hills of Brown County,
and I could not with the others keep up the pace.

I had to find a resting place.

It was a hillside with a few rocks and a tree
that looked like it could be a nice resting place for me.

The tiniest stream of water over the rocks did fall
gently trickling down the hillside into a very small pool.

About this place there was nothing special at all,
and yet as I rested there,.... it was like the most pleasant dream.

Over the years in my memory I often return
to my resting place by the trickling water stream.

In my mind I am returning to the most quiet and
beautiful place I have ever seen.

RHAPSODY

Her voice was so crystal-clear

It was such a joy to hear.

She sang of joy and sorrow.

She sang of hope for tomorrow.

She was singing about writing the songs.

There were endless things to sing
all day long.

Describing all kinds of people,

from places in far Africa,

to a little white church with a steeple,

came the subjects of her songs.

She was singing all day long

accompanied by a flute with notes so soft

and pure they reach the skies.

She sang about flashy people looking for fame,
who were living in the fast lane
of the music business in LA.

She sang about war..... crime..... and poverty.

She sang about love and betrayal.

She sang about the problems of her life.

All her thoughts strung together with words
so descriptive you could see her naked.

In a voice from sounds so low and earthy
to high notes that were so crystal-clear, she
sang all night long.

She swept me away with her song.

RHYTHM

The rhythm of life rolls on through revolving doors.

In the still and quiet, as I lie dependent for my most basic needs,

I reflect on the events of my life.

Some things once so taken for granted have now disappeared.

My visions are now only in my mind.

Gone is the perception of every rich and delightful hue.

Red and gold colors of the burning sunset have all disappeared.

I smell the sweet perfume of the roses and carnations by my bedside,

but I no longer see their delicate pedals and lush colors.

Memories of long-ago drift by.

Tiny soft pink and chubby hands grasp at objects to explore.

Big eyes shine with wonder. Everything is new and exciting.

Each day is adventure of new scenes and sounds.

I am held close to the heart. Precious they think I am!

My every need is cared for, and I know they truly love me,

and the rhythm of life rolls on through revolving doors.

SAFE PLACE

I need a safe place to go,

I need a safe place to find

refuge for my troubled mind.

A place of great peace and tranquility,

taylor made just for me.

A place so safe and free from harm,

my mind will feel no alarm.

Where is this special place for me?

I have to keep searching,

and with some luck I may see

a special haven just for me.

SEARCHING

Words of wisdom are strung like pearls
on the necklace of life,
illuminating the darkness of the night.

How can we eliminate all the pain
In this world of strife?

We constantly search for so many ways
with only a few who actually pray
for the answers we so desperately need.

When will we get the help?

When will we receive
inspiration from above?

The answer we need is found in love,
the wise people say.

To find out how this can possibly work,
we can only pray.

SEEDS

We are all sowers of seeds,
some sow flowers,
others sow weeds.

What a difference in this world
we can make
if only we realize,
if only we take
the time to consider
what we can really do.

There are so many positive things
if we only knew,
we are all sowers of seeds;
some sow flowers;
others sow weeds.

SILENCE

I don't hear the sound of raindrops ,
when they fall on the ground.

I don't see the great poverty,
when it doesn't apply to me.

All the sounds and the sites we do not know,
are still there, as through this journey of life we go.

SIMPLE SONG

He sang the most wonderful song.
It wasn't before long
that everyone would say
he could turn around anyone's day
to a happy time with his words and rhyme.
He came and gave a simple sign
to all who would listen
of the clear mountain waters
that would shimmer and glisten.
He sang of the pure and simple things
that to our memory brings
joyful memories of the past.
He sang of the joy that is love that lasts.
He sang about watching an eagle fly.
He sang about the brilliant colors of the sky.

He sang about all the wonders
that every day are here
even though they are ever near,
we never see.

His songs really spoke to me.
His vision was so crystal-clear,
of the simple and wonderful things
that are so near.

His vision was so clear,
and it lasted for many years.

He sang of happy times,
and of times that made him sad.

Even when things were really bad,
he sang of hope that would come
if we can only trust in the one
who controls our destiny.

SMALLTALK

It was 4 AM as the old woman lay awake in her hospital bed.

With a tap on her door, into her darkened room came

a beautiful young long blonde haired woman

technician who said, “sorry to wake you,

but I need to draw lots of blood for a test.”

The old woman replied, “no problem,

I’ve been awake for so long, go ahead and do your best,”

The technician carefully drew vial after vial of blood,

and attached the appropriate bands.

She was so skillful in drawing blood with her delicate hands.

Even more blood was drawn.

Because they were talking, it didn’t really seem that long.

“My husband and I are celebrating our 50th anniversary

this June,” confided the old woman from her bed.

“Congratulations” the young woman said.

“How did you meet him?”

That subject is where the young technicians conversation led.

The old woman smiling broadly said,

“we met at a dance. It was love at first sight!

When we met as strangers in the night,

I could have never guessed how happy we could be.

It was such a lucky day for me!

I was just there to accompany a friend you see.”

He was tall, dark and handsome, of slender build.

The more I talked to him,

the more impressed on my list of hoped for

qualities in a future husband he filled.

I could tell he loved children you see.

That was high on the list of importance for me.”

“How did you know he was the right one
when you met him that night?”

said the technician as she turned off the light.

The old woman paused for a moment,... and then she said,

“as we talked I saw we had the same core values,

by that I mean what was really important to me,

was the same for him and I could see

he was a man who could become very important to me.”

As the young woman walked to the door,

looking over her shoulder she said, “thank you for sharing!”

The old woman replied,” thank you for caring.”





SNOW

The landscape is dressed like a bride all in white
for a gentle snow has been falling
all throughout the night
coating every single thing in sight.

The graceful trees all trimmed with a flocking of snow,
line the horizon of my backyard and I know
their lovely attire is only for a very short time.

For soon the sun will rise and remove every trace
of all this loveliness and grace

that now appears in this lovely scene,
a vision so beautiful as if in a pleasant dream
will soon be changed again,

and to return again I do not know when
another gentle snow will fall
covering the earth was such an elegant dress.

When this will happen again, I can only guess.

Did you ever notice the snow falling on the ground
doesn't make a single sound?

It removes all the drabness of our day,
dressing everything in the purest of white
the gentle snow that can change our life.





SOLITARY WALK

As I walk along windswept hills,
I am greeted by no golden daffodils.

No bright red poppies so fine
are lining this path of mine.

Walking all alone, through the grasslands
with only occasional sparse rocks and trees,
there is no gentle breeze
to brush my cheek.

Growing tired and ever so weak,
will I ever find the destination I seek?

STORY

Tell me a story of love and affection
of a boy and a girl who chose the right direction
to live their life, even though they encountered great strife.
Tell me of days long ago, about brave people I do not know.
Their stories are so interesting to hear.
Tell me of the things they held dear.
Once there was a time when there was a great war.
Tell me of their struggle, please tell me more.
When the whole country for one cause united,
when the course of our land was decided
by men and women who really cared.
All of our people who really shared the burden
to keep the smallest and weakest of us alive.
Maybe in the future we can all join together to survive.

STRANGE CREATURES

We looked at each other through the dirty glass window panes,
each wondering about the creature on the other side.

Who was staring to spy on my domain?
What were her thoughts as she gazed at
me with glassy eyes in symmetry?

Her body was large and not graceful like mine.
She was covered by a fuzzy coat in blurred pattern hues.
Does she have a family? Does she drink the morning dew?

Unimpressed..... I spread my wings and flew away.

STRANGE EXPERIENCE

I am the voice of those who made the choice
so very long ago to communicate,
through their writings and to relate
the signs and messages from afar.
Even though I do not know where they now are,
I must write down and never debate
what they are simultaneously telling me even though
I do not see
why they have chosen me.
Messages so very strange,
I have nothing to them to add or rearrange.
I put my pen to paper, and so many diverse ideas flow.
Where they are coming from I do not know.

Even so I will write all these things that very often
come in the middle of the night.

There is nothing I can personally say,
instead only find a way
to record most faithfully
all these thoughts that are overflowing me.

Coming to me so rapidly are words of black and words of white,
to describe the brightness of day and the deep darkness of night.

All these words come into my mind, yet I can never find
where comes the source of all this pain.

Yet, I will remain a simple person putting words on paper.

Someday I may find out the source of these words later.

TAKING DICTATION

it was just last Spring when my Master first came calling.

I had no agenda, there was nothing for which I was longing.

I was lying in bed, wrapped up warm and tight.

It was 4 AM in the middle of the night.

I am an artist who had never written any poetry.

I was a painter, that's how people would describe me.

All the sudden words are flowing so fast over me.

Ideas about so many different things,

words fly forth, and my heart sings.

Stories of love and life

are dictated to me in the middle of the night.

I write as fast as I can.

These ideas are not coming from any earthly man.

The Adulterer

“STONE HER !..... STONE HER !..... STONE HER !..... “ they cried.

She has broken the law and this day
for this crime she should pay.

He knelt on the ground tracing letters in the dust
that made no sense. As he paused, he looked up into the
faces of the angry crowd around..... and saw no traces
of compassion in their eyes.

He knew full well the actions of their lives
but made no argument to save her life.

His comments I am told were something like the following
I will relate.

“Let those who have no sins on their souls
be the ones who cast the first stones” he said.

Slowly..... they went their way..... one by one
until he was alone with the woman.

She looked up at him with tear filled eyes.
Who was this stranger who in his quiet way
had saved her life on this dreadful day?

THE CITY

In the early morning

The city at 4 AM

Sleeping

shades drawn tight

barely any light

from lampposts give

while thousands live

with so much potential

to give

Silence

Silence broken

a single bird is heard

light breaking

in a city waking

cars begin to move

Traffic building

freeways clogging

people taking dogs walking

children racing

to catch the school bus.

They never look at us.

Horns honking

Crowds racing

across intersections

no time to talk

walking faster

to reach jobs waiting

nobody saying

“good morning” today

walk sign blinking

walking faster

to avoid disaster

people shopping

revolving doors swinging

moving round and round

to the street noise sound

Bread is baking
French fries dancing in grease
hotdogs grilling
no time to stop
something new
restaurants Italian, Chinese, Greek
all in a row
so many tastes I do not know
if only I had time
to stop for a while
rush past
can't be there last
sirens wailing
ambulance and police
rushing past
will the victims last?
There is no telling

next door they are
still selling
appliances, coats and shoes
no one hears the news
three innocent shot trying
to stop a robbery.
Laughter ringing
church bells singing
Rice is thrown all around
soon the couple will leave town
teaching
learning
playing games
saying promises
reaching new heights
preaching
converting souls
searching for
finding

building up

breaking down

repairing

calling, calling, calling

buying, selling, buying

selling, buying, selling

turning around

Listening

speaking

hearing

listening to the sound

of orchestra playing

actors saying lines in a play

living

relaxing

healing

dying

crying

a new life is born
walking swiftly home
got to get dinner soon
family arriving
everybody striving
to get the necessities of life
Food aplenty
Some ain't got any
making wishes
delicious dishes
some are brand-new
get at the drive through
driving
surviving
wondering
if things will ever change
if we can rearrange
all the problems in our life
won't find the answer tonight

fighting

lying

deceiving

never receiving what is right

tracing

erasing

all the unpleasantness of life

resting

suggesting

turning away

trying the monotony to break

looking for something to take

have another beer

don't see anything very clear

nothing new in town

drinking

smoking

joking

never hear the singing sound

we are so small

don't make any difference at all

politicians promises making

all the time ever breaking

talking

filling the news day

nothing of importance to say

night is falling

someone is calling

it's time to play

forget the problems of the day

hearts beating

looking

finding a better way

inviting trying

saying

“ have a nice day “

willing thrilling

billing

writing

words to say

killing

throwing away

deciding

reworking sorting searching

inventing a new way

understanding

dividing uniting

ever striving

to survive the day

lights blinking

thinking

we have nothing to say

reviewing renewing

wondering

controlling

staying away

wind blowing

someone is sewing

rain is falling

continually calling

working out

having doubt

trying

reducing

denying

finally releasing

negative thoughts

something bought

turning around

leaving town

driving fast

hiding in a mask

not up to the task

going home

all alone

in despair

no one to care

left outside

too much pride

standing in line

waiting for the time

arena doors open

pushing

shoving

finding seats

game beginning

running

dodging

ball bouncing

whistle blowing

referee

not me

brooding

substituting

sweat dripping

skin glistening

hearts pounding

racing up and down

the court

full-court press

in distress

passing

twisting turning leaping

grabbing shooting

ball soaring

ball going

through the hoop

buzzer ringing

crowd cheering

crowd booing

are we losing

jumping up and down

joyful sound

all around

yellow cabs swim like goldfish
darting in and out of traffic stream
past restaurants, clubs and pubs
laughing
rushing
music playing
flirting
dancing
romancing
The young enjoyed the night
coming home
turning down covers
sleeping

Silence

The early morning
at 4 AM
the city sleeping

THE COUPLE

I saw two people standing looking out at the sea.

I was fairly close,..... but they never saw me.

Very close together did they stand,

yet.....never once did he hold her hand.

Their thoughts seem to be so very far away.

I wonder about the couple I saw that day.

Were they thinking about the things they had planned?

Very close together they did stand.

Yet,..... never once did he hold her hand.

THE CRY

Who am I, not to hear the children cry.

No one in sight, yet I know throughout the night
all over the earth so many don't see their worth.

Who am I, not to hear the children cry.

Wrapped safe and warm in their mother's womb,
not aware it will become their tomb,
who am I not to hear the children cry.

THE DRUM

Tell me grandfather about the drum.

The old man with stringy gray hair dangling on his shoulders

Sat on the front porch under a faded and tattered awning

with green and white stripes

shielding him from the warm morning sun.

His fingers traced over the top of the drum

touching the cracking surface,

stroking it tenderly

as a mother caressing her newborn child.

Long ago..... in a time when our people were strong

this little drum held an honored place.

He told his grandson of times of joy and dancing.....

in times of celebrating and singing,

this drum held a special and meaningful rhythm.

The drum sang of pain..... and prayed for rain.

The drum is silent now.

There are no more dreams.

.....

.....

A single tear traced its way

down the old man's weathered and wrinkled face.

Looking up he saw his grandson's worried face.

A beautiful young face in shades of brown,

with thick black hair streaming all around.

He paused for a moment.....and to his grandson said,

” I was wrong.”

“ Hold this old and worn drum in your hands.

Remember who you are and who you were born to be.

Listen to the Drum for even if it is old

and worn,it has many stories to be told.

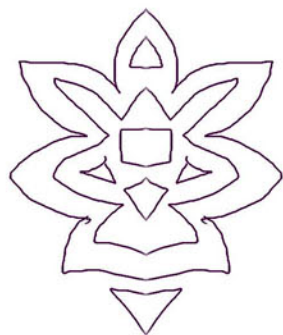
Listen to the stories well.

There are so many stories to tell.

Learn from those who have gone before and understand

though times were hard

they persevered and stayed with the land.



They faced war, starvation, and extinction

but were very brave.

They went through hardships to save you,

..... the next generation.

You are here because of their sacrifice.

You are here because of their life.

Be strong and carry your burden well.

Someday far away

you will be a grandfather

with stories to tell.”



THE GARDEN

The old man walked slowly carrying a green watering can
in his left hand and in his right a well-worn rake
he used as a staff to steady himself.

His stooped frame moved to the backyard
to begin his watering patrol.

To keep this garden growing was his goal.

The fiery poppies danced in the dwindling light
just in front of the teeming lilac bush that grew
well above shoulder height.

Sweet lilac perfume with gentle grace
drifted on the wind from this pleasant place,
that was so well cared for by the old man.

He had placed so carefully each small seed
and never allowed any weed to take its place.

The flowers began talking to each other and sighed
“what would we do if the old man died?

How would we be renewed,
if no one's here to treat us so dear?”

How did they seem to know that this was the year
the old man would go to his final reward.



THE GUARDIANS

My guardians were so powerful and strong,
they blotted out the sun in the East.

In Winter their armor was adorned with
a white hue glistening in the sun.

In Spring their coats were tipped
with a lush blue green hue.

For many years they guarded me from
the turmoil of the outside world.

They came softly ,..... drifting on the
Summer breeze to an unsuspecting world
below. My guardians would not run away,
and were touched by their evil presence.

They stood motionless in the storm
buffeted by the wind and rain,
ever faithful, protecting me from the outside world.
Throughout all the seasons , they maintained their post.

As their life is fading, I now have
the ability to stand alone.

I give thanks for their protection while I was weak.
They protected me, giving me time to grow in strength.

When this evil presence took over the guardians mighty form,
they still protected me by keeping me warm.
As the fires burns red embers deep, I realize that it is now
time for my guardians to sleep.

When my night shall come, and I open heaven's door,
I shall surely see you standing tall and strong, my guardians.
They are once again patiently waiting for, and protecting me.

For nothing God has made so strong and beautiful
on this earth, shall not be in heaven to greet us,
as we ascend to our spirit home.

THE GUESTS

We welcome them into our homes.

They come dressed in their finest clothes
smiling with large white teeth.

They speak to us and lovely sounds,
that captivate our souls. We received them with pleasure.
We delight in their presence.

Turning and twisting words until we no longer understand
their meaning. They become our constant companions.

Day and night throughout the seasons,
in a restless torrent they obliterate our existence.

They are the mind thieves. In all shapes and colors,
they come to steal our essence.

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

There once was a monotonous disingenuous hippopotamus,
who had a perplexing philosophy of nonconformity.
He spoke with great verbosity about the great joys of neutrality,
while he took every opportunity to turn every variety of animal
that was in his vicinity into obscurity.
He had a propensity to cloud every transparency
so you could never see what he was really talking about.
With voluminous speeches from high towers,
he spoke with no integrity for many hours.
His head would move from side to side as he spoke,
as he traveled far and wide
addressing the subjects of his animal kingdom.
Boisterous and loud, he marveled the crowd
with disingenuous patter about things that really didn't matter.

THE HOUSE

They lived in a house on a tenant farm long-ago.

They were people well did I know.

He was a plain and simple man,

who worked very hard and cared for his animals and land.

He was a shy man with a kind heart.

He wasn't a very talkative man,

but people liked him right from the start.

He came to our area after he had lost his farm.

He had come to keep his family safe and warm.

The house was a three-bedroom ranch style.

Their nearest neighbors were more than a mile.

It was a house painted white.

The small house was not much to look at,

but against the elements it held tight.

This little house had your basic windows and doors.

As to any architectural style, there wasn't much more.

A concrete cistern set by their front door.

The cistern gathered the water from a windmill on a near hill.

The work of a farmer is the fertile land to till.

The house had no closets to store extra clothes.

But the tiny house solidly kept out the bitter wind that blows.

Sometimes in Winter Jack Frost would paint

the most amazing pictures on the window glass.

I saw just that on the day I visited them last.

There was no indoor plumbing in that white house to use.

A nearby outhouse served its purpose when

there was something necessary to do.

The house consisted of three bedrooms.

A place for a mom and a dad,

and a room for a little girl and lanky young lad.

Their living room had a TV and two big overstuffed chairs.

As to other furniture,..... there wasn't much else there.

Their dining room was decorated in wallpaper

with huge flowers and painted walls.

In front of this decorator wall set
a large white chest freezer holding food for all.
A large steel furnace sat
in the dining room's corner place.
As to the flooring, of carpet there was no trace.
When I visited them, I noticed
the dining room floor had a pronounced slant.
More details to relate to you
about that room, I simply can't.
The last room was kitchen
where the meals were cooked.
I noticed a large black cook stove,
as through a doorway I looked.
I saw the farmer's wife,
a woman who carried a lot of weight.
As to getting the children ready for church,
she was never late.
A wonderful cook was she.
I was there tasting such delectable things
she made especially for me.

I saw so much food that delighted my eyes.

Swiss steak with rich brown gravy,
mashed potatoes and everything else
you could wish for that was so savory.

She served corn on the cob, dripping with butter.

Such a delicious taste like it, I can't think of another.

Warm bread from the oven was set on a shelf.

Such delicious bread, I could never make myself.

There were so many delicious dishes,
she was the kind of cook that could fulfill anyone's wishes.

Tart rhubarb, cherry and golden apple pies,
would appear often before my eyes.

I ate chocolate pinwheel cookies too tasty to deny.

I enjoyed tall chocolate cakes with
overflowing white fluffy frosting piled high.

To explain how wonderful these things tasted, I can only try.

Once when I was there, she asked me
to bring up some fruit from the cellar.

I walked out of the house and opened up
a slanted weathered door.

Her recipe required several jars of peaches more.

Down an old unfinished staircase I went

to retrieve objects for which I was sent.

The cellar walls were lined with shelves

that held the canned bounty of the farmland.

On the dirt floor I would stand

and see jars of grape juices and jellies

that were stacked so tall,

next to large jars of golden peaches

in delicious syrup that was so fine.

More jars were carefully placed on shelves

on the wall in a straight line.

This house still stands although the family is long gone.

I really have not thought about that family for so long.

A small white house sitting alone on the land,

is still standing..... doing the best that it can.

THE INVITATION

Come and walk along on the Great Garden paths with me,
and find the most beautiful vision of glorious tulips to see.
They are ablaze in orange and red so fine,
all displayed in a line their splendor to array,
I cannot one minute delay
to walk among these magnificent treasures,
for they to me give so much pleasure.
These flowers sing a most wonderful song,
but their glory at this level won't last very long.
I will probably not be able to be here again to see,
this beautiful site and the blooming trees.
You must be here at the very appointed time,
for there is no announcement, there is no written sign
for when all the earth in its own time decides to sing.
When all the earth knows it is time for Spring.



So many different trees lie inside the Great Garden fieldstone walls.

There are so many trees, some very large and some very small.

Other trees ancient and very tall, stand beside a small waterfall.

There are trees of Oak, Maple, Elm and White Birch
and all kinds of Evergreen.

Every place you look there is something different to be seen.

The Willow branches seem to dance in the breeze.

There will be so many wonderful things for us to see.

The Magnolia and the Redbud trees are in full bloom.

This beautiful state won't **last very** long.

The flowers seem to be visually singing a most wonderful song,

Bright magenta pink azalea bushes are so fine,

and golden bushes of forsythia are bursting forth

in this early Spring time.

As we walk in the early part of the day,

everything seems to be brand-new

made just especially for me and you.

What a wondrously beautiful scene do we see,
from the emerald green grass to every tree
now becoming so very much alive.

Everything has left its winter sleep now to survive
with such a wonderful and glowing state,

I simply must to you every detail completely relate.

Come and see the Crystal Pond

like a mirror reflecting nearby trees and the sky.

See in the lovely bright blue heaven with
large round puffy white clouds gently drifting by.

We will walk across the small Red Bridge
and find bright yellow daffodils in abundance on the ridge.

Just you and I walking alone,
following the path over each and every
so carefully placed steppingstone.

Next to these stones lie tiny blue flowers ever so small,
if you're not careful, you would never even notice them at all.

These little flowers are blooming at a weathered old tree trunk's base,
to see everything I must pick up the pace.

Small flowers of light lavender hue
are still dripping with the morning dew.
As I walk on I see
a magnificent panorama created just for me.
No mortal king could ever possess a treasure more fine,
than the glorious vision of the true beauty
of this awakening Spring time.
Come and walk the Great Garden paths with me.
There are so many treasures for both of us to see.

THE MAGIC PEN

I put my pen to paper and at once

the pen by itself begins to write.

This happens to me at any time of the day or night.

Words in great abundance over me do flow.

Where these words come from and their meaning,

I do not know.

Ideas of joy and pain,..... and of a gentle summer's rain

come swiftly to my pen again and again,

as I write without thinking.

How can I write about things I am not seeing?

How can I write about things I am not feeling?

Stories of so many different people's lives,

and what they had to do to survive,

flow from my pen for so many days.

I cannot count the different ways

that have come into my mind to express

happiness and joy,.....and deep felt loneliness.

Stories of pain and so much sorrow,
and stories of those souls hoping for a better
tomorrow, my pen by itself does write.
Stories of those in so much darkness
searching for the light
come to my mind at 3AM in the middle of the night.
Why I am writing all these things about
experiences I do not know?
But wherever these inspirations come from,
when I am called to write..... I will go.

THE MATCH

“How can I be of any worth, my light is so very small,”
said the tiny match.

“So much light comes from the glorious sun.
It allows children to run and play
outside on a warm Summer’s day.

Even at night,
the moons light can show the way.

I am so small,
I can’t possibly make any difference at all.”
said the tiny match.

The wise old man looked at the tiny match,
and continued to listen attentively.

“I can only burn for the shortest of time,”
said the tiny match pensively.

The little match continued,
“I cannot even compete with a street light,
that lights up the sidewalks at night.
Why have I been placed on this earth?”

The old man sat for a moment
looking at the tiny match and finally said,
“you,... though very small, neither great nor tall,
should never forget you are the spark
that can get something great on fire
in a world that is so very dark. ”

THE PASSION

A large man with skin the color of coal
stood in the choir loft, and he sang in the
most glorious voice rich and deep.
He sang of Christ crucified in pain beyond belief.
I could not understand a single word he said,
yet to my Lord's passion, he most definitely me led.
Reverberating off the cathedral walls,
came the most important call,
to come to the foot of Christ's cross.
I knew without out his boundless and enduring love ,
all would be lost.
For our own souls he came and paid the cost.
Who am I that you should love me so?
Who am I that to the cross for me you would go?
I hope and I pray that someday
I may understand your sacrifice to give me eternal life.

THE PERFORMANCE

He walked on stage guitar in hand,
not a particularly handsome man.
He had not a large band of accompaniment,
yet to the rafters his clear voice sent
a message that was with words so small
came a sound that reached one and all
of the 20,000 that were present there.
As he sung my mind drifted without a care.
His voice took me far away
back to the time when I was a carefree child at play.
With his voice he made me see
all the wonderful things that I could be.
A man who wrote his own song,
would not stay on this earth long.
Why is it when someone so special in my life,
can't last longer and relieve my strife?
His songs remain to this day
I play them now and then when I want to let
my mind drift far away.

THE POET

Together we read his poem, and I can truly see
he is speaking directly to me.

He talks about walking along the shore by the sea,
watching the waves come in upon the sand.

I know that the poet is from a distant time and faraway land.

Yet, it as if I am walking with him now in my time,

I am listening to his most precise and descriptive line.

He talks about the sky gray above.

He talks about the loss of his only true love.

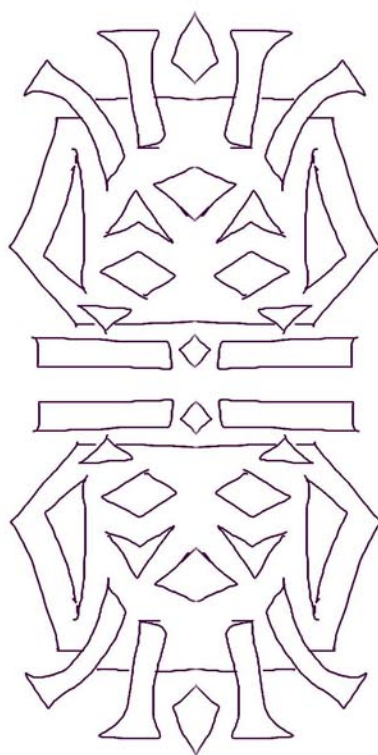
I can feel his pain and his deeply felt loss.

I can feel the hurt of his infinite cost.

Alone and sad is he,

as he walks along the shore with me.

Through his verse and through his choice of words
come every detail of his pain,
he allows me to see
and feel all his thoughts as he walked in the rain.
We walk along the shore together
as if lovers from a long time ago.
This experience gives me so much pleasure
that is beyond any human measure.
Why he is speaking to my soul, I do not know.
But what I do know is that when I am called,.... I will go.





THE QUESTION

What did the waves say as they came knocking at my shore?

Were they gentle guests who came to rest on my beaches?

Did they come to play and laugh on a summer day that was so pleasant?

Were they angry when they came to destroy and pound

with such an angry sound, they hurt my ears?

Did they even try to contain their rage, as they ripped apart the lives

on every page of the book of life they exterminated?

Who can say what the waves did say?

What did the wind say when she gently brushed my cheek

and whispered in my ear?

Did she come to sing a song while strumming the white clouds

with her delicate fingers?

Was she angry with me when she drove the snow so hard

I could not see my neighbor's house 20 feet away?

Was she possessed when she blew apart the town of 2000 people

in a screaming rage?

What did the wind say?

What did the water say as he babbled in a brook
in a voice so sweet and gentle it made me smile?
What was he saying when I heard him chattering in the
fast stream as he rushed with speed to find his dream?
I heard him arguing with the rocks as he crashed into them,
never agreeing but bouncing off with contrary comments;
what was he saying?
His mighty voice resounded as he roared
over the edge of the mountain precipice,
flowing down with such majesty and grace.

What stories was the water telling?

The waves, the wind, and the water are all speaking to me.
I do not understand what they are saying.....
but at last now..... I am listening.

THE SCRIBE

I am the recorder.

I am the instrument through whom
come messages and thoughts
of far and distant places
speaking of Joys, sorrows, and wonderful graces
of which I have no knowledge.

Why am I chosen? What is my place?

These answers I do not know.

As long as the messages come,
I will write them down as fast as I can.

THE SERVICE

As the organist struck strong and positive chords,
the celebrants , in black and white cassocks,
marched into the small chapel on the hill.

“ O Bless the Lord, my soul.”

The cantor sang.

To the rafters his magnificent voice rang.

To obtain heaven for their parishioners, was their goal.

These were dark-haired and bearded men,
who come each day to talk about sin.

I had watched and heard them many times before.

Today for some strange reason,

I felt I should listen more.

Was there a special message just for me?

Was there something special I should see?

The priest's sermon continued.

"Jesus is the one who heals those with a broken heart."

How did he know right from the start

what I was feeling?

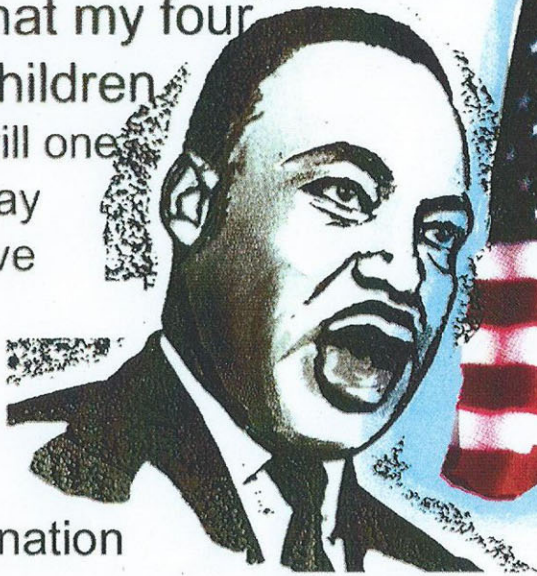
I looked up and saw a beam of early morning light

coming through the windows near the ceiling.

Just a small shaft of light,

driving away the remnants of the darkness of the night.

I have a dream
that my four
children
will one
day
live



in a nation

The Dream Continues

where they will not be judged by the color of their skin,
but by the content of their character.

Martin Luther King Jr.

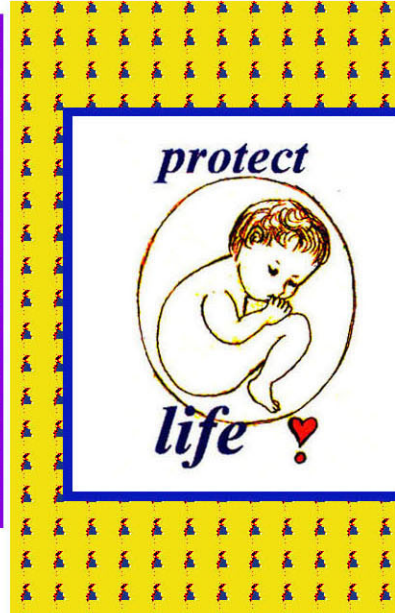
Richard Steve Sharon Sally Samuel Scott Sophie
Susan Sean Tom Tony Tamara Tina Timothy

Andrew Sarah Elizabeth
John Christina Sally Jane
Mindy Nathan Daniel
protect



Richard Amanda Linda
Angelina Randy William

Andrew Alex Amanda Arthur Anita Alice Art
Angela Bonney Bobby Brandon Betty Betina



THE SILENT TRAGEDY

Every day in the USA there is a 9/11.
3000 innocent tiny souls are sent to heaven.
No one can hear their silent cries,
no one sees the pain when each of these children dies.
Baby boys and baby girls are lost to this world,
because we have allowed ourselves to be hurled
into the abyss of unimaginable cruelty
that we ourselves have decided not to see.
No one can see the tremendous cost.
No one can see the tremendous loss.
Tiny souls by God's own design,
in our great country cannot find
a place of safety and warmth so needed,
when through the Supreme Court's decision
has been depleted
all the basic humanity needed
to care for a newborn child.

THE SINGER

As he stood by the window with sunlight streaming
through the colored glass, I heard him chanting
in a voice rich and deep.

He sang in an ancient language I did not understand.

He sang of my Master in tender and prayerful sounds,
and the room was filled all around with sounds
so pleasant to hear.

He filled the chapel with such a wonderful melody.

Although the specific words he sang I could not delineate,
I knew he was singing about my Lord.

Only his voice echoed sweetly off walls and entered my heart.

With this wonderful rich sound,
with each note so carefully sung

to my soul my Lord was brought before he was done.

THE SONG

I hear the guitar and repetitious drumbeat
moving steadily along, in a slow blues song.
The singer sings of walking alone.
He is so very far from home.
Alone he stays, lost in so many different ways.
I can feel his pain. So many times I've felt the same.
He sings about not being able to change, or even start.
His words reach deep into my heart.
Well his situation do I know,
he has found a way to touch my soul.

THE STORY

My little three-year-old granddaughter sat
on her grandpa's lap,
listening to a story about a tiger named Tigger.
With each new revelation in the story,
her eyes and those of her sister
looking over his shoulder grew bigger.
Darkened shining eyes so bright,
sparkled in the evening light.
These precious little grandchildren of mine,
I gazed at for a long time.
I was wondering if I would ever see them again?
Would I ever be remembered as their friend?
When times so joyful as these come into our life,
they seem to wash away all our pain and strife.
Just two little girls listening to their grandpa read
a story about a tiger named Tigger,
and with each new revelation
their eyes grew bigger.

THE TEST

As she lay on the hospital gurney in the darkened room,
she looked at the light coming in through the open door,
and she wondered ever more how life was so fleeting.

She was hooked to a machine that could see
the true image of her own heart beating.

She could see the texture of her hearts skin,
as each beat pumping blood
was changing the shape of her heart within.

This miraculous sight shown so clearly on the screen,
was a sight that only recently could be seen.

She could hear the sound that her heart was making
as moving the blood through her beating heart
was taking so much effort keep her alive.

The miracle of a beating heart cannot be denied.

This marvelous human machine was giving her life.

Her beating heart with each tiny movement in three dimensions
was shown so clearly on the computer screen.

Only doctors could interpret what this test would mean.

Did she have the will to live?

Did she have anything of value left to give?

Every measurement so accurately taken,
was shown on the computer screen
as the technician adjusted the thin green line.

As she lay there motionless on her back,
she wondered would there still be time?

THE TRAVELER

I'm walking down the road,
carrying such a heavy load.
I'm moving down the line,
with the passing of so much time.
Been so long since I've heard
a happy song.
Rain just keeps coming down,
since I left my heart in LA town.
Some days I just don't want to try anymore.
Why did I leave my only love
standing on the shore?
Now the sky is growing dark,
and I don't see very much light.
I struggle to reach my destination,
before the coming night.

THE VIEW

My room has the most magnificent view.

Glowing willow trees of lush yellow-green
and oaks of deep red hue with sunlight dancing
through their sparkling leaves greet my day.

At times the peaceful rolling waves
with light penetrating their graceful curves
to glow like stained-glass in turquoise colors,
delights my eyes.

Mountains draped in glistening white
edged against a crystal blue sky, I do enjoy.
All these scenes from my window do I see.
My room has the most magnificent view.

I see colors of regal purples and vibrant reds,
rich tans and oranges in an ever-changing scene.
All these I see from my window view.

Trees so large they reach the sky,
and green landscapes too beautiful to explain
appear out my window.

How strange it is from this 8 x 12 space I share,
I can see so many wonderful places
when I open the window of my mind.





THE WARRIOR

Tap.....Tap.....Tap.....

His large frame moved slowly forward grazing the walls with his fingers.

Tap.....Tap.....Tap.....

His feet were turned awkwardly outward as he walked.

When he stood still his feet were in a triangular shape
giving him the solid base of a statute.

Tap.....Tap.....Tap.....

The smell of Japanese food frying on the grill filled his nostrils.

Tap.....Tap.....Tap.....

Next came the scent of Parmesan cheese,
and garlic accompanied by bread baking in the oven.

Tap.....Tap.....Tap.....

Chili peppers and spicy flavors
which delight the tongue were drifting through the air.

Tap.....Tap.....Tap.....

French fries were dancing in the gurgling grease.

Tap.....Tap.....Tap.....

Past stores and walls he had memorized,
around tables and weekend vendor displays he walked.

Tap.....Tap.....Tap.....

Wounded but not conquered, with his white cane
he walked around the mall.

THE WIND

Most of the time, the wind has such a quiet voice.

We never make a conscious choice

to listen to what the wind is saying.

Could it be singing or could it be praying?

We never listen to the breeze

as it rustles the leaves in the nearby trees.

Was the wind sighing, or was it crying?

We never bend an ear

as the wind moves at its beck and call

in the stratosphere

the large white round drifting clouds.

The wind never speaks to us out loud,

of all its plans and dreams,

and of its impossible schemes to rearrange our earth.

We never consider the wind's true worth.

Are these winds divinely directed

and worth our attention?

This may be something we

should ponder and mention.

Sometimes the wind may be tired of being ignored,

and rip apart every carefully nailed and painted board,

of a well cared for home

and leave us lost and alone.

When we finally learn to hear the wind speak,

we are often left so weak

we cannot say a single word.

At last the wind has got our attention and is heard.

THINGS CHANGE

Nothing lasts forever, neither joy or pain,
neither loss or gain.

Some days you don't have a single care.

Other days you just can't find a single friend anywhere.

All things pass away.

It may take a year or just a day.

All our fears even when they have lasted for years,
are nothing but a blip in a moment in time.

We need to ourselves remind
nothing lasts forever on this earth.

We need to consider what has real worth,
and never forget we were planned
and placed on this earth.

We are constructed of a body and a soul.

It is imperative that we know

what will happen when our life will end.

Will there be any one,..... any cherished friend

who will be there at our side

when we reach our lives end and are tried

for every lie and indiscretion?

Will there be a stern lesson?

I hope I can find some grace today.

To reach heaven is the goal for which I pray.

THE WILLOW TREE

In Spring I would awaken from the dark night,
and open up the shades of my kitchen window
and see dancing in the early morning light
my neighbors backyard Willow tree.

It was such a pure delight to see.

From branches once so dull and bare,
now standing before my eyes

I could clearly see there

the sparkling yellow-green leaves on the Willow tree.

The sight of these glowing leaves would bring great joy to me.

As an artist I would consider each and every color and shade.

Deep forest, emerald, and yellow-green colors

were shining in the early morning light,

like a vision in a fantastic dream scene in daylight.

What made this tree sparkle
was from leaves tiny bits of reflected white light
that gave this tree such unearthly sight.
Branches gently swaying in the Spring breeze,
were dancing gracefully just for me.
Most of my life I never bothered to see
earth's lovely treasures that were placed in front of me.
This tree has died and was taken away.
Although many years have passed, to this very day
I can remember what a joy it was to see,
my neighbors early morning sunlit Willow tree.

TIME

Why is it when you finally learn
to play the game,
the clock runs out.

Why is it after years of silence,
and you can finally shout,
the clock runs out.

All the dreams and all the songs
were always there.

Yet it took so long, and the clock ran out.

TIME LEFT

I do not know how many more days I will live.

I sincerely hope in some small way I can lift
someone's spirits high.

To be able to do this I can only try.

I've been given a very special gift.

It is my sincere wish to share this gift.

As the coming days pass by,

I can only hope to discover why
this task has been assigned to me.

Will I find the answer,

I can only wait and see.

Each person has been given
an assigned amount of time and treasure.

How they choose to use these gifts,
only they can measure.

TINY CREATURE

She flies above me on gossamer wings.
Of the most gentle things, she sweetly sings.
Calling softly from above,
she speaks to me of heavenly love.
Wondrous words she tells me so secretly,
this gentle creature of Faery.
Her hair is spun gold ever so lightly curled,
she speaks to me of so many things
that are not of this world.
Why has she chosen me on this day?
Why has she chosen me so many things to say?
This heavenly creature from above,
is speaking to me the true meaning of love.



TRANQUILITY

A fish glides gracefully through the green water
of a nearby small Lily Pond.

The fish is only visible for a moment,
and then beneath the water it is gone.

A butterfly is dancing in the air,
flying so high without a single care.

In the distant woods,

I hear the faint sound of a bird calling.

Soon from the sky filled with rolling clouds, the
Summer rain will gently be falling.

There is no need to move at an urgent pace.

All is at peace in this quiet place.

TRAVELS OF THE MIND

Trapped in a world of pain, I found a way
to transcend my existence.

In my mind I fly over the patchwork of fields,
with golden wheat, lying perfect in the warm sun
like a patchwork quilt that covers me with warmth.

I see the golden daffodils and hear them shouting
..... "we have returned! "

They are stark yellow against the dull
gray and brown earth.

I feel cool mist against my cheek,
as I walk in the rain forest.

The green color I see is electric
with the color no painter can paint.

The logs recline and rest.

Lovely green moss covers their rough skin,
in a soft finery not seen before.

Green dominates the landscape of the northern forest
as if to say I am the color of life.

The mist falls on the land touching the cheek of the spirit.

Dead trees rest as decaying logs giving life to moss.

From the death of a living body,
a new Spring of green grows.

I soar above ground in gray brown mountaintops
set against a cobalt blue sky
filled with enormous white clouds
drifting slowly by in their quest for the sea.
Layer after layer of mountains,
each layer becoming more pale and blue
on the horizon, fill the landscape.
Soon the mountains appear like mounds of cake
drizzled with white frosting of snow.

I can see clearly now in all directions
as I glide effortlessly above the scene below.
I have never known such peace, such quiet,
such wonderful tranquility.
Below me the foothills are carpeted in emerald green,
with a lushness that is wonderful to observe.
The foothills give way to distant mountains.

Darker in shades of blue,
the mountains are edged against the sky.
Like an Azure jewel, a lake rimmed
with snowcapped mountains appears below me
stretching peacefully to the horizon.
It rises strong and powerful before me,
silhouetted against the sky.
I'm humbled by it's majesty.
Like a bride dressed in white, it stands for all ages to see.

A river lined with many trees in different shades of green
swerves toward the horizon.
Shades of darker green appear
as the heavily forested area is seen below.
Deep dark woods full of mystery lies just below me
Below me lies my destination, with rocks and craggy areas
with water pulsing around their bodies
in a never ending turbulence.
"I will never give up" they say,
as they stand there defiant against the surf.

ULTIMATE DESIRE

Have you ever considered what it would require
to fulfill your hearts most longed for desire?

What would be the ultimate cost,
and to obtain and achieve it, what would be lost?

When a passion is so deeply felt inside
that nothing to attain it can be denied,
can we still retain our humanity and pride?

Some search for fame, wealth, or glory.

Those things will soon away pass.

These types of treasures never last.

UNITED

United we stand, divided we fall.....

needs to be the anthem that goes out to all.

It is not whether or not we are black or white.

What is important is whether or not

we stand up for what is right.

It is not the color of our skin,

but what kind of heart lies within.

United we stand, divided we fall.....

needs to be the anthem that goes out to all.

It is not whether or not we are a woman or a man.

It is whether or not we chose

to be the best that we can.

Our country was formed by those from so many lands,

who could prosper accordingly by

the work of their minds and hands.

It is not whether or not we were born

to position and great wealth.

It is in how we chose to respond

to the condition of our birth we are dealt.

It is not whether or not
we belong to the correct religion,
that will determine our status
and our human condition.

Although those who come here,
many diverse languages do they speak,
to join together in strength
one solitary language we speak.

United we stand, divided we fall.....
needs to be the anthem that goes out to all.

It is not whether or not we are young or old,
each generation has its own wisdom untold.

United we stand, divided we fall.....
needs to be the anthem that goes out to all.

VALUE

How do you measure a man's value?

Is it what he has accumulated on this earth?

Does his bank account reflect his worth?

How do you measure a man's value?

Is it in the poems and stories he writes?

Is it in the wars as a soldier he fights?

Is it in the lives he saved?

Is it in the thousands of souls for whom he prayed?

How do you measure a man's value?

How do you measure a woman's value?

She stayed at home, and was always alone
taking care of her children.

Did she teach them well?

She never produced anything to sell.

She worked hours long and hard.

Did she bring home her pay to help sustain her family?

If she never married, did she have a career?

Did she hold anything of importance dear?

How do you measure a woman's value?

How do you measure the value of a little child?

By his grandfathers old stories, he was beguiled.

He played and sang to imaginary friends.

Was he of importance in the scheme of life?

She was a little girl with shining eyes so bright,

who was afraid to sleep without her teddy bear at night.

Whether or not she lived or died as a child, did it matter?

How do you measure the value of a little child?

How do you measure the importance of old people?

Gone are the days when they attracted the young.

Do they still have any songs left to be sung?

Is their experience worth anything that is new?

Do they still have anything worthwhile to do?

How do you measure the value of old people?

Do we value the real things of worth?

Will we ever find the answer on this earth?

VISIONS

I have seen the joyful sparkle of light
glistening on the azure waters.

I have ridden on waters so peaceful and calm
as a tabletop gliding silently
to my destination.

I have clung to the edge of the boat leaning
far out for balance
as we raced to shore
before the coming thunderstorm.

I have seen the graceful waters moving slowly
and breaking in waves on the shore
on a warm summer day
with crystal cerulean blue skies
with huge puffy white clouds.

I've seen the angry power surging for endless miles
crashing to the shore
sweeping away thousands of lives
leaving behind nothing but destruction and desolation.

I witnessed eternity
and it never even noticed me.

WALKING

As I was walking I heard the breeze
whisper sweet nothings to the trees.

The birds seem to say
the events of the day.

As the birds conversed, a small squirrel
darted from my path.

“I mean no harm..... there is no cause for alarm.”

Just a quiet walk at the end of the day,
on a shady lane where I can truly say
I am at peace.

WEATHER

I can feel the approaching storm.

What was such a bright and beautiful sunny day,
has just changed to a time of stillness and skies of gray.

How quickly the weather has changed.

How quickly our pleasant life can be rearranged.

You can feel the change in your bones.

All of the sudden you feel so lost and alone.

I begin to feel the wind upon my skin,
and a new sense of awareness is awakened within.

With each passing moment the wind does increase.

Now with claps of thunder come sheets of rain,
and at last comes the storms climax and a final release,
of turmoil so strong.

The storm seems to be lasting forever,
but in reality it doesn't really last very long.

The weather is like the days of our life,
which are full of so many times of joy and strife.
Our lives can be changed in a moment
at any time of the day or night.
Sometimes we are trapped in darkness.
Other times we stand free in the warm sunlight.
Some days we are drenched in rain,
feeling such tremendous pain.
Other days we stand with joy in the warm sun.
Days after days turn into years which run
the gamut of what we call life

WINDOW

They say the eyes are window to the soul.

How could anyone know

what really lies deep inside,

whether it's kindness or false pride.

How can you look into someone's heart,

and know that right from the start

how kind that person could be.

It's just something you have to find out in reality.

What makes a person so wonderful and fine

can sometimes take a lifetime.

WINTER WIND

The howling Winter wind makes sorrowful sound,
as I gaze over the frozen snow-covered ground.

The air is so cold it stings my face.

In my mind I wish for a warm place
to sit by the fireside tucked in my old easy chair
with a comforter so wide

it covers me as I stay cozily tucked inside.

Warm and safe in my old easy chair

I do not have a worry or care.

The howling Winter wind makes a sorrowful
sound, but I don't care because just like a bear,
I fall asleep with warmth all around.

WRITING

A long time ago, lived a man I did not know.

He wrote down some fine lines,

about all the joyful and happy times.

I like to read his words now and then,

because in them I find joy and happiness

that has eluded me in my own time.

Words can last forever.

This means we should carefully choose

what we write down and leave behind.

We should carefully guard and never leave

to others thoughts of a troubled mind.

