



**Life**



# I Am Me

by Lynne Campbell

I am me;  
complete, unique, and alone.  
I am one of a kind  
Yet —  
There are many like me.

Each thought is mine, although  
many think.

The air I breathe, for a short time,  
belongs to my body.  
But how many other bodies has this air  
traveled through  
And  
lived in?

I go through life and experience  
each single joy  
and sorrow;  
Yet  
All go through a day which mirrors mine.

As I die —  
Life rushes on past and engulfs me.  
It smothers the very breath  
of my existence.  
But when has it stopped  
to note the passing of one  
greater than I?

Although I am but a particle  
I still compose the whole.  
Nothing can live without me  
but I live  
only because of the existence of everything  
for

I am me;  
complete, unique, and alone.  
I am one of a kind  
Yet —  
There are many like me.



## Daybreak

by Eve Brill

Daybreak! The world is fresh and new;  
We regard with awe its splendor.  
Don't the trees whisper in the wind,  
And the birds sing?  
Can't you hear the animals  
Carrying on their morning chat?  
We all go on our own way,  
Doing what we must.  
But the day is soon over:  
Dusk has fallen and the world will sleep.  
Time will pass by quickly, though.  
Yes, I see the sun again.  
Daybreak!

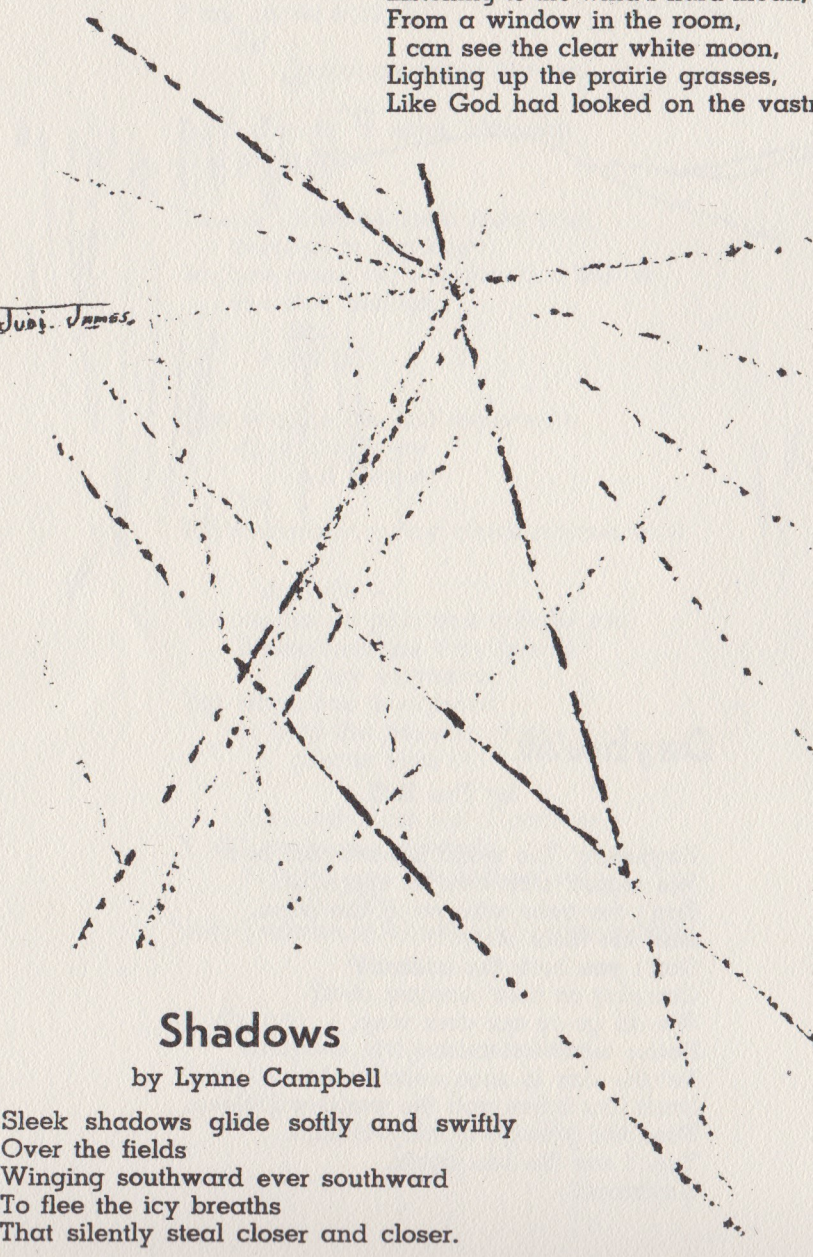


# The Shanty Window

by Dan Hines

On the prairie in the West,  
In a shanty, not the best,  
Listening to the wind's hard moan,  
From a window in the room,  
I can see the clear white moon,  
Lighting up the prairie grasses,  
Like God had looked on the vastness.

Judy Jones



## Shadows

by Lynne Campbell

Sleek shadows glide softly and swiftly  
Over the fields  
Winging southward ever southward  
To flee the icy breaths  
That silently steal closer and closer.



# Sin

by Karen McLaren

Along the path of darkness,  
Many a sin is here;  
And though they are immoral,  
A spark of hope appears.

The righteous and the worthy,  
The wicked and oppressed,  
Are cursed with endless sins  
Until eternal rest!

# The Departed Days

by Lynne Campbell

The departed days of Youth and Laughter,  
Of smiling friends and soft gray kittens  
Gone forever down dusty roads  
That lead to Age and Loneliness.

Their lips no longer breathe the sigh  
of the crossing paths  
Of Youth and Age.

Their lambient eyes shall not behold  
the dancing sunlight  
Of love's first birth.

Their gentle hands no longer feel  
the pulse of Nature's  
Merry laughter.

Their soothing voices shall not speak  
to give us comfort  
As Age appears.

The departed days of Youth and Laughter,  
Of smiling friends and soft gray kittens  
Gone forever down dusty roads  
That lead to Age and Loneliness.



# The Old Man

by Linda Luck

He sits and thinks of days gone by  
And of the time he will die.  
It's in moments such as these,  
He's not thinking of birds and trees;  
The beauties that surround him,  
No longer shall astound him.





# What Is It and What Does It Want?

by Ruth Meggison

There's a tea kettle on the stove.  
There's no fire under it though.  
Like a wolf, it whistles loud and long  
Oh! What makes that whistling song?  
Is it the wind?  
Or is it the spirit whistling, whistling?  
What have I done?  
What have you done?  
What do they want from us?  
Maybe our money? No  
Maybe our heart? No  
Its nothing

More  
Than  
Our  
Souls.



## Time

by Mike George

Time is an endless thing.  
It may be a child in a swing,  
Or it may be a bird made to sing.  
It's the life and strife of everything.

M.KAY



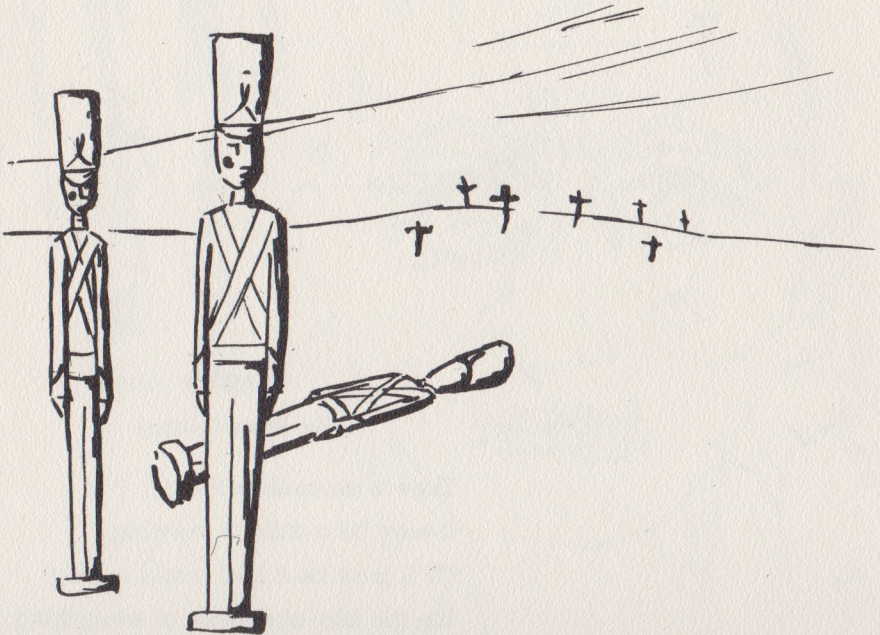
# Creation

by Doug Stamp

Little toy soldiers stand tall  
With silent guns and painted faces;  
In childish games they fall.  
Children in silence play;  
Old men watch in day-dreams gay.

Children and toys grow old.  
Real soldiers stand where toy ones fell,  
Booming guns and voices bold,  
Scarlet blood through fingers runs,  
Youth has died, what have we done?

Grown children in silence play  
The sun shines upon fragrant flowers  
Where children lie, asleep in peace, with  
No dreams of live toy soldiers in sunny fields  
Broken swords and dented shields.



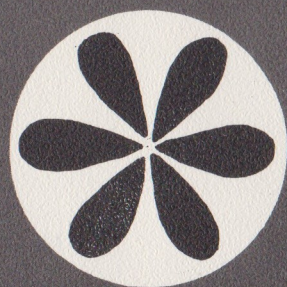


# My Teacher

by Linda Vanderhoof

My Teacher caught me on the swing  
one nice October day —  
He thinks that I am much too big  
To play with swings and stuff —  
But I don't think I am too old.  
I think I am just old enough.  
But teacher is my elder —  
I should do what he thinks best.  
So I'll stay off the swings  
And leave them to the rest.  
It's funny how my mother  
Thinks I am her little girl,  
And teacher thinks I am too big  
To give that Merry-go-round a whirl.  
I wonder if my teacher—  
was once a little boy?  
I wonder if he played with swings,  
Or any other toy?  
He seems so gruff and settled —  
Like he never had much fun —  
Like playing ball or marbles,  
And games where you have to run.  
I wish he'd spend some evening  
Thinking things out straight —  
And remember that he ran in and out  
And forgot to shut the gate.  
Or maybe he tore his Sunday pants  
Climbing a forbidden tree.  
Maybe if he thought real hard  
He'd remember being as bad as me.





DEATH



# The Woods

by Jan Wissmuller

As had been my custom of late, I proceeded in the smothering heat of the early afternoon on my daily excursion. Over the last few years, my health had been in a precarious state. Unable to diagnose the ailment my physician could only advise that I remove myself to a warmer, dryer climate. It was with little hope that I had liquidated my assets and resettled in southern Spain. It was an antiquated and isolated villa, about fifty kilometers from Granada in the northeast and a kilometer or two from the teeming, sun-drenched sea, that I finally settled. I had proved that the quiet isolation of my abode, coupled with the steady, distant roar of a tossing sea, would relax my unraveled nerves and allow my mind to gain fortitude. But even the sounds of the breakers along a forbidding coast failed to subdue the sounds that eternally wrenched at my soul. The laughter. Deep hidden in my paralysed mind, the horrible, inhuman sounds—laughing—always mocking my quietest, most feeble hope. My pilgrimage had not arrested it—I only became accustomed to it; familiar with awakennig to it in the dark early hours of the morning, with my body wet and motionless with terror; used to having it build up out of an equally oppressing silence and pound on the walls of its own chamber that was my skull. But in my new dwelling there was refuge, brief and fleeting though it was.

In the still lonely heat of early noon, when the demonic glee had risen to the point of tearing my very soul apart and scattering its members, I would run from my isolated dwelling and flee, in the mute horror of my own mind, down—constantly down—the dusty stifling road-way. After a considerable distance, my nerves still wrought beyond control, I would turn down a wide empty path. Ah, the path, how I'd grown to know that path. At every turn, every step of its immutable course I could perceive death. The dried, cracked mud, from months, maybe years of unbroken drought, the plants on the side struggling and losing in a battle to live. The very perception of this death thrilled me—thrilled me to inhuman heights of terror. I could see it everywhere, reaching out for everything, suffocating all life in its inescapable grasp.

As I have told you, I knew the path; it horrified my very being. Yes, true, but yet—I did not fear it. For always at the end of that hideous pathway was the woods. Ah yes, the woods. It was not a large area, perhaps a kilometer in diameter, but to me, it was a haven of a rare and strange peace.

Due to the climate, wooded areas were scarce in that part of Spain. I did not know why this spot supported life, perhaps it was due to the proximity to the sea or perhaps a natural spring. Furthermore, it was virtually isolated, hewn out of the hot dusty terrain as if in the fancy of a god gone mad.

Here, the path changed char-



acter. Oh yes, in the woods I could still perceive death, reaching out, beckoning, clutching at my own being, but, ah, how subtle. So delicate and cunning was her reach that I scarce would have perceived it if my senses were not as acute as my abnormal nervousness had of late made them. Ah, she was so quiet, her insidious laughter a mere sigh of anticipation, but my ears—they heard all—all, including that one macabre sigh that gave her plans to me even in the solitude of my haven, the woods. I had long ago realized the icy appendages of the pestilence stalking my path, but here—only here in the woods—death was made to walk quietly lest I detect and evade the hideous grasp.

My only companions were the trees, grotesque, misshapen, as if in contortions to avoid the very talons reaching at us all. But they were green, heavy with foliage, cool in the scalding heat; fellow warriors in a battle with an inevitable conclusion. The very sight of these beautiful, wonderful, grotesque monsters filled me with a sense of communion and still, morbid peace.

And so, as I had often done before, I stopped in the middle, a spot where either end of the wooded path was just beyond sight. Despite the satin coolness of the trees, it was uncomfortably hot. I stood in the still, hot air and looked at my familiar companions. Today, of all days, they seemed to be in sympathy with my affliction. The scorched air rising from the

path made them appear as floating images before my weary eyes. But in numbers there is fortitude, and that I was with knowing companions comforted my mind, sick and queasy though my physical being was. One could lightly hear the sea, the warm, friendly, living sea, a few kilometers away. Besides that, for the first time in many weeks, I heard nothing.

"Ah, my friends," for the first time in my sojourn I addressed the trees which looked almost man-like in their awkward form and the wavering heat. "It seems as if our fair opponent has deserted us for a time. Perhaps we are too cunning for her to approach?"

An icy breeze cut through the hot air—indeed through my garments, Nay! my very soul! It reached, it caressed, said things that no human has ever dared to utter.

"Milady!" cried I, terrified past all human sensations. "We were just bemoaning your absence. Come; join us!"

"No milady!" she was beckoning, silently questioning. I was white white with horror; my spine was an icy liquid. "We don't fear you. You'll not sneak up and catch us unaware. Ha! Ha! Ha! We are wise to all your ruses."

A laugh. The perspiration on my hot body froze and ran down my back in tiny glaciers. I thought my fear had been at its greatest possible height, but



—oh God—the hideous laughter! It had always been so distant, but now, only now—so near, engulfing me in its inhuman chastisements. Just in the woods, I thought, in that thicket. Yes—I placed that hideous sound. Not to be taken without a struggle, I dashed for the shrubbery, intent on taking the offensive, against what, I did not know. The horrid mirthful sounds retreated. I pursued—ran till my lungs prayed to explode. Closer—closer yet . . . then I fell.

That was many years ago. Occasionally, I still walk down the path. The trees are dead, dead years ago. In their place straight young trees are coming up. The air is cooler now, not

cold, just not hot. I live in a small villa similar to the one I lived in then, I've never seen that one again. And everything is silent. Silence grows heavy in the air; among all else, it is the god that reigns supreme. It has since that day. The blue from that clear, sunny sky has come down and filled the air with a peaceful mist and the air is sweet. It's beautiful now; if I didn't fear breaking the silence, I would sing about it. I haven't seen or heard from death since, either. But, sometimes, when I look down the leagues and leagues of wide straight pathway and inhale the cool, blue air, my drugged mind screams at unlistening ears . . . Where am I?

## I Heard a Shriek

by Sheryl Harrison

I heard a shriek and then a mutter,  
A deafening noise, which made me shudder.  
It was a shriek and then a moan,  
It was a squeal and then a groan;  
It made my heart stop, and then pulsate  
As it bellowed out my woe-begotten fate,  
A fate of hell, and so forlorn.  
But the time has come, and I must depart,  
Even tho I shudder, and grow sick at heart.  
For I now join the shriek and I join the groan,  
And I join the shudders in my new home,  
My new home, which I deserve so well,  
Oh my horrid new home, down here in hell!



# Out On A Limb

by John Halstead

It was a very poor evening for driving and his wife's incessant chattering did not make it any better. The cold, intermittent rain and biting October wind made him thankful that he was in the warm car, even though his wife was off on another tirade about his driving.

"Slow down, George," she badgered, "the road's too slick for this speed. What do you want to do, kill us both?"

His foot automatically eased off the accelerator.

"No," he thought, "only one of us, my dear."

He often wondered how he could have possibly survived these last nine years since they were married. For the first few years he had managed to control himself, smile, and say "Yes, dear." But as of late she never missed the chance to criticize him.

On and on she talked. Usually he was able to shut out the shrill sound of her voice, but tonight even the roadside could not occupy his mind and blot out her gibberish.

The night before she had dragged him to the terribly dull cocktail party their neighbors, the Schneiders, had given. To worsen matters they were, at this very moment traveling to visit Diane, his wife's sister. Helen, his wife, and Diane invariably managed to tell him that Helen, coming from a prosperous family, had, in marrying George, gone beneath her station. Oh, how he disliked visiting his sister-in-law's large

rambling, and expensively furnished home. "Someday," he thought, "someday I'll find a way to get rid of her."

Up ahead he noticed the tall, gaunt figure of a man standing by the roadside with thumb outstretched. Before his wife had a chance to say more than, "George!", he stopped the car, reached across her, and opened the door for the hitchhiker. Slowly and rather awkwardly the man squeezed into the front seat and let out a sigh of relief.

"Whew, I sure appreciate this. I'd almost given up hope. My name's Dan Rica. I'm tryin' to get a job in Fenston I've lined up."

"I'm George Davis," he replied, "and this is my wife, Helen. We're only going into Lakeview, but we'll be happy to give you a lift there."

He flicked on the radio and smiled inwardly as he glanced over at his wife, who was quite obviously uncomfortable with the stranger in the car.

A newscast came over the radio giving the report of a man who had picked up, been beaten up, and robbed by a hitchhiker. An idea popped into his mind. "Why not?" he thought. "It'll work."

"Please, George, change the station," she pleaded. "You know I can't stand to listen to the news." Quickly he changed the station and rode on listening to the country style music that Helen so enjoyed.

As they drove he thought, "All I've got to do is stop the car, kill them both, and tell the police the hitchhiker tried to attack us. It's very simple."



"Do you feel that vibration? I think it's coming from one of the tires. I'd better stop and check."

"Oh no, George, can't it wait until we get to Diane's house to fix it? We'll be an hour late as it is and you know how she hates anyone to be late for dinner."

"No, it might be something serious. I'd better check," George insisted. He stopped the car, went around back and opened the trunk where he took out the tire iron.

"Mr. Rica, would you give me a hand back here, please?" George inquired.

George waited until Rica clumsily emerged from the car before he killed him with a single blow on the top of his head.

His wife screamed and shouted hysterically, "What did you do that for? Have you gone mad?"

Then she clambered out of the car and ran screaming into the bushes alongside the road.

"I've waited for this for years, Helen," he shouted.

George ran after her and found her in a small clearing with a stick raised over her head.

"Don't come near me, or I'll use this," she warned.

He took a step and she swung, catching him just above the temple. This infuriated him and he lunged into her, knocking the stick out of her hands and throwing her to the ground. Then he hit her with the tire iron until he was quite sure she was dead. He went back to the car and pulled Rica's body to the clearing. Then he picked

up his wife's lifeless form and placed it in the front seat beside him.

A half-hour later he was in the police station acting the part of a grief-stricken man who had just lost a dearly loved wife.

"Well, we were driving to my sister-in-law's house when my wife suggested we stop for this hitchhiker. He seemed like a decent fellow and there was no one else around to give him a ride. But when I stopped he pulled my wife from the car and slugged me with a stick he had hidden in his clothes. When I came to, I saw that, what was his name, Dan Rica, running after my wife. I chased after them, but I, I . . ."

With tears streaming down his face he told of how he found Rica standing over the bloody body of his wife and hit him on the head with the tire iron he brought from the trunk.

In came an officer. "Inspector, we've got Rica's body downstairs in the morgue. I think you should have a look at it."

"I've got them fooled," he thought, "they've believed everything."

The inspector came back in and thoughtfully asked, "Mr. Davis, in your statement that you just wrote, you said that Rica ran after your wife? Is that correct?"

"Yes, and quite swiftly."

"Mr. Davis, I am charging you with the murder of your wife and of one Dan Rica."

"What? That's not very funny, not at all funny. I'll report . . ."

"Mr. Davis, Dan Rica had an artificial leg, he could barely walk, much less run!"



# A House Once New

by Doug Stamp

A house once new and once outstanding  
Stands now alone in dying silence;  
A partial obscurity, in the minds of men.  
Are those the cries of the dead?  
No, just the sighs of the aged.  
These feeble walls that once held life  
Now only hold its memory.  
What good is this house in the world of the living?  
It belongs to the dead like a stone

## My Affliction

by Dorothy Calvin

There he sat, as alone and useless as he had been in his entire life. His hands were merely bones thinly covered by some near-transparent skin. The nails on his skinny fingers each held their share of black dirt. His feet lay before him on the cold and damp floor of the cave. His crippled old body covered with filthy rags, ached.

As I put the basket of food down, he stared fixedly at me. Eating the sandwich, I had finally to laugh hysterically as I noticed what he had been doing. His mouth would open each time I took a bite into that tender meat. I knew how his stomach must have been climbing to his throat, and how he would have gladly died for a sip of my water. But I was too clever to let him die! What more pleasure could I hope for than to watch him squirm and plead?

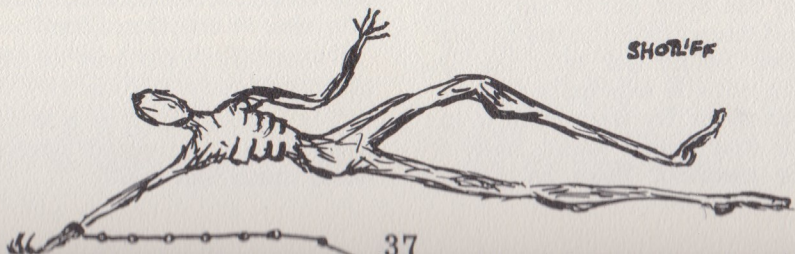
How I hated and loathed the very sight of him, my brother.

Mother had loved him so much more, even though I was the brilliant one, the deserving one.

Lincoln, being born both deaf and dumb, had taken more than his share. Now I was taking mine! Ten years have passed since I first chained him here in this cold, yet "hell-like" world.

I threw a dry crust to the animal, and watched him try to swallow it whole. His dry and cracked lips bled, and the blood trickled down his neck and onto his robes. "Choke, choke on it!" I crackled. The devil coughed once, and slumped over . . . . . dead.

What pains I had gone through! What pains to keep him just barely alive and hidden from the world! Now his skeleton-like body lay in one lump, as the other rocks around me. My only pleasure, my last pleasure, he took from me . . . . he, the cursed one!

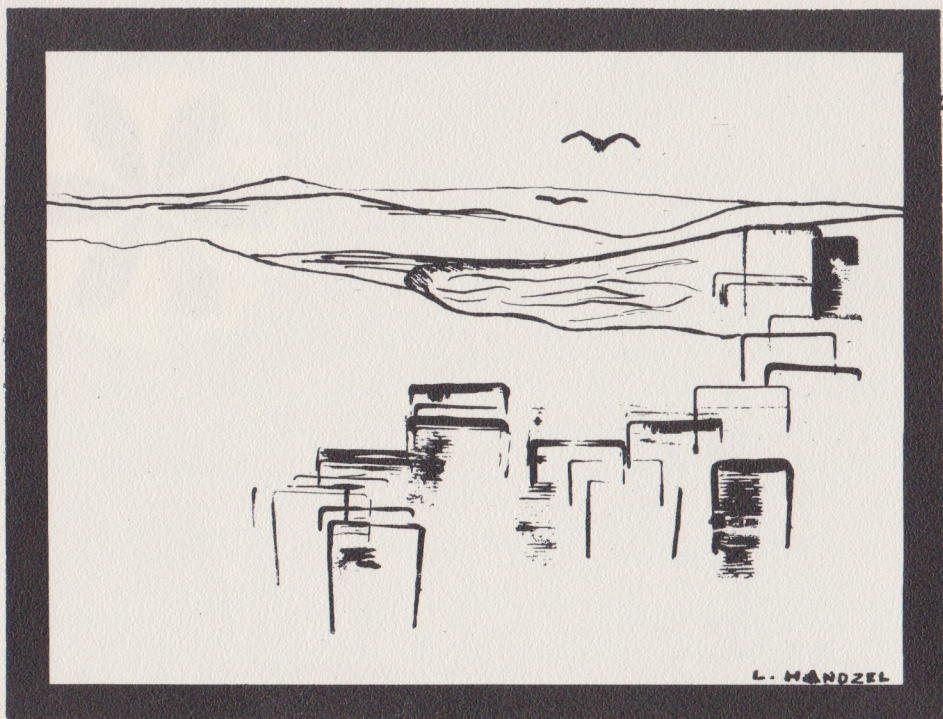






**Love**<sub>E</sub>





## Lovers Walking

by Eve Brill

Lovers walking, hand in hand,  
Stopping by the sea—  
They look out, and behold the mystery  
Of what wonders have been wrought.  
All through life they walk together,  
Laughing, crying, learning, loving.  
But life is short and times goes by.  
Side by side we see their headstones,  
Standing tall against the sky.  
And as we leave them there to rest, we see  
Lovers walking hand in hand.



# On Love

by Eve Brill

It is a path, a road, a way,  
A tender smile from day to day,  
The rolling waves that kiss the shore,  
Love holds this —— and more.

The flowers blowing in the breeze,  
The winter snow upon the trees,  
A holly wreath upon the door,  
Love holds this —— and more.

The spring rain falling on the grass,  
An icy lake, as smooth as glass,  
A birthday with a child of four,  
Love holds this —— and more.

It is a path, a road, a way,  
Its splendor grows with every day,  
And rolling waves still kiss that shore,  
~~Love holds life~~ —— no more.

# Love and Life

by Larry Cislo

Why is the sky so bright and bold  
When a baby to love is born?  
And why is the sky so dark and cold  
When one grows old to live no more?  
Why does life go short and long  
When the love for one lives on and on?



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