

LONESOME OLD GRAVEYARD

Lee Evans

These stones are here to make a wall
Between the Present and the Past;
They soothe us, like the moss that grows
Upon our speechless Epitaphs.

As soon as we are born we roam
This cemetery's fateful yard,
Stoop-shouldered with our memories—
To lay them down is too too hard.

It's such a park-like setting, though;
Unlike the grounds of Buddha's day.
What's out of sight is out of mind—
Or so it seems to us to say.

Think back to ancient India,
And lay your Ego's burden down
Where, swollen, blue, and festering,
The corpses are strewn all around.

Oh who could bear to see them laid,
In olden times, where hawks and crows,
Black vultures, jackals, dogs and worms
Licked meat from off their crazy bones?

Whose weeping eyes today have chance
To scrutinize those skeletons
Whose flesh and blood's last remnants hang
In ragged shreds by loose tendons?

The undertaker primps and preens
Our loved ones like our children's dolls:
The fear that drives this modern age
Promotes his business aims withal.

Compassionless, we turn our heads
From all in whom ourselves we see—
In spite of all our former lives,
Denying what we all must be.

For gamblers play against the odds,

And bet their bodies on the deal
With bones gone loose as tumbling dice
Cast thoughtlessly upon the Wheel.

The bones of hand and foot and thigh,
Of skin and pelvis, spine and shin,
Will contemplate no funerals
While lying in the rain and wind.

What chance have you to recognize
Your Image in that charnel field,
Stripped down to bones that rot and drift
Like dust upon the Ancient Mirror?

We modern folks have no such thoughts
While roaming in this world's graveyard,
Stoop-shouldered with our memories—
To lay them down is too too hard.

It's such a park like setting, though;
Unlike the grounds of yesterday.
What's out of sight is out of mind—
Or so it seems to us to say.

These stones are here to make a wall
Between the Present and the Past:
They soothe us, like the moss that grows
Upon our speechless Epitaphs.