

PETALS OF A ROSE



Chris Rauthe

*The collected poems
and essays of*
EDNA FRANK

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PART I

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DEDICATION

From the beginning of time
Humanity in every corner of the World
In every country
In every walk of life
Has searched for the fundamentals of existence
Food clothing shelter
But once man's basic needs were satisfied
He began to look about to improve
His home, his environment
And as he acquired more and more knowledge
And his brain expanded, and he became more
civilized
Man began his quest for the intangibles:
Truth Beauty Love Confidence Courage
Understanding Faith
And always Hope for Humanity
In the next generation to create a better World
Than the one he found.

My book is dedicated to man's quest
To all Humanity
To those who have come before
To those who tread in the procession now
To those who will join
The Caravan later.

Who says there is no immortality
When we are the sum
Not only of the acts and deeds
But of the dreams and the hopes
Of those who have gone before
And we who tread
In the procession of Humanity now
Contribute to the sum
Of those...yet to come!

Contribute always the best
Of heart and body, mind and spirit
Of every generation of human souls
To the sum
Of Divine Eternal Light.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

This is a story within a story
A Primer of Philosophy in poetical form
Of moral, political, religious, sociological thoughts;
It is an autobiography
Written by an individual
Who, like you
Goes on living
Carrying on a day by day existence
Challenged emotionally, mentally, physically,
 spiritually
By involvement in Life's experiences.

It is the story of an individual
Confronted by complex exigencies of experience
Gnawed by anxiety, doubt, fear, foreboding
Dedicated to a quest for Truth
Motivated by intrinsic desires
The necessities: shelter, food and clothing
The luxuries: diamonds, pearls, furs, travel
Saddened by the gap between the haves and
 the have-nots
Aware of limitations that impel hopelessness
Buoyed by innate adequacies of mind and spirit
Propelled by the drive of determination
Driven by a fragile, gossamer, intangible spirit
Indestructible as rock
To surmount obstacles and move forward
To achievement, fulfillment and triumph
With a heart filled with Love, Faith and Hope
To create Harmony in my own immediate sphere
 of activity
And thruout the World
So that some day ALL Humanity will know
 Peace on Earth.

Yet an individual who distills from that
very involvement
In Life's myriad, complex experiences
The richest essence from the Flower of Life
Distills...ALL THE GOOD
From the experiences
In the Moments of Lifetime
To sustain the will
Not only to carry on
This challenging existence
From day to day
But to greet each experience
With high expectations
With sustained enthusiasm
With uplifted face and eager eye
In keen anticipation of the day's adventure
"Hi, Life, what's next on the Agenda of Experience?"

Yes, individually, THIS IS MY STORY
The story of a woman, and yet within my story
I universalize my individuality and universally
It becomes the story of HUMANITY,
Of Humanity's relation to Humanity
And to the Universe
And of Humanity's kinship with God,
The Universal Life Force,
The Source of World Spiritual Power
That created and directs the order of the Universe
The Planets, including Earth, Humanity's abode
The Sun, the Moon, the Stars.

It has been said
All books that have been written
Autobiographies especially
Are confessions
Written in red ink
For all the World to see.

Here is my book
And a confession it too
Seems to be
Of the great love
That fills my heart
The dreams
The faith
And the hope
I have
For ALL HUMANITY!

PETALS OF A ROSE

A single white rose
The last rose of my garden's Summer
I pluck...and place upon my desk
In a yellow vase
Its sweet fragrance scents the air
And fills my aching heart and soul
With exquisite beauty.

A single white rose
Thru God's beneficent goodness
Such exquisite beauty
Given to man to possess
Such sublime beauty fills
My soul with reverence...Ah yes!

But day by day as time passes
My heart grows sad, soon will be the Winter's snows
I watch each white petal slowly wilt
The snow-white petals
Turn cream, pale tan, deep tan, dark brown
The green shining leaves
Become dull and crisp and dry
Day by day, with saddened eye
I watch...the brown petals as they fall
One by one
On my white desk blotter
And there they lie...
So many moments of my life
So many memories to recall.

I leave them...where they fall
For I cannot bear to toss away
My garden's last white rose
And sever
The one remaining link
That binds me to my garden
And to my garden's Summer.

A single white rose
That links me to the World
And to the Universe
And to all Summers
And to all Time that has been
And now is but a memory
And to all time that is
Of which I am an active part
And to all time that will be
For the many yet to come...

The dried brown rose petals
Crumbling to dust
Lie undisturbed...for days...for weeks
For months...for months and months on end...
Dried brown rose petals
Undisturbed on a white desk blotter
Dried brown rose petals
Crumbling to dust.

* * * * *

Petals of a Rose
The Moments of a Lifetime
A lifetime of years, months, weeks, days, hours
But hours
That are broken up
Into fragments of Moments
Moments, the better we might understand it
Moments, the better we might endure it
Moments, the better we might enjoy it.

Fragrant fresh white rose petals
Are the pure symbol of birth
Of new recurrent life
The bright gay banners of true love
Of dreams, faith and hope
All the sweet glowing moments
Of a lifetime
The moments of truth, beauty, love, understanding
The moments of confidence, courage
The moments of fun, gayety, happiness, humor, joy
The moments of wonder, promise, ecstasy sublime.

Wilted brown rose petals
Are the pieces of a broken heart
The fragments of unfulfilled dreams
The scraps of lost faith
The chips of deferred hope.

Dried brown rose petals
Crumbling to dust
Are the dust of disappointment
Of disillusion, frustration, hopeless despair
All the bitter moments of a lifetime
The moments of tears
The moments of sadness, pain, tragedy
The moments of loss, death, separation
The moments of emptiness and futility.

All this...
To me the petals of a rose disclose
But each moment
Sweet or bitter
Tragic, comic
Sad or gay
A part of the lifetime that is mine
As I travel along my way.

Along my way...
Down that long journey of life
From the shores of birth
Across an unknown uncharted sea
Full of dangerous reefs, swirling whirlpools
Treacherous undercurrents and currents
At times thru short periods of soothing calms
On...on to the inevitable shores of death
Thru cycles of varied
Unpredictable, unforeseen and unforeseeable
Experiences
That each moment of life
Brings to me.

PETAL BY PETAL

Each experience, each poem
Is a petal of the Flower of Life
And, as petal by petal
You see the complete rose
Gradually unfold
So poem by poem
The gradual complete meaning
Of the Flower of Life
In "Petals of a Rose"...is told.

Hold but one petal of a rose in your hand
And you have no conception
Of the exquisite wonder and beauty
Of the COMPLETE ROSE
Read but one experience, one poem
And you have no conception
Of the complete unfolding
The exquisite wonder and beauty
Of the FLOWER OF LIFE
Poem by poem
"Petals of a Rose"
Would to you disclose.

In "Petals of a Rose"
You meet one
Who has been living YOUR life
Like liquid, I poured myself
Into your mold
My experiences...into which I peered
In and around, before and behind
Are but yours
Or, if not already yours
They will be
Because to be Human
Is to have sensitivity and feeling

(stanza continues)

And to react to kind and unkind stimuli
Physically, mentally, emotionally
The same as any other Human
Regardless of Racial, Religious, Ethnic or Sexual
DIFFERENCES!

I have been thinking your thoughts
Facing your problems
In empathy, I have been
Seeing eye to eye with you
Feeling your reactions and emotions.

With you, I have been diligently seeking
The basic FUNDAMENTALS of Human Existences
Freedom of Thought, Conscience, Religious Belief
Choice of Education and Life's Work
According to my innate abilities and potentialities
So, that I, too, can live the allotted days of my life
On this changing earth, in changing times
Thru ever-changing circumstances and conditions
In a Country, City and House of my own choosing
With my Religious Beliefs
My God, my family and loved ones.

Like you, I want to pursue a good life
Healthful, prosperous, successful
In serene and peaceful tranquility
Without anxiety, fear or threat
Of harassment, torture or violence
By any other Human
Because of differences of race, creed, sex
Ignorance, lack of understanding, prejudice, hatred
Or just jealousy, greed and envy!

Neither do I want my position in life
To be determined
BECAUSE of my race, creed, sex or by quota
Rather I want to find MY PLACE in this World
Recognized and evaluated as a PERSON
Best qualified, who has what it takes
To do specific work in a specific job
And as such, to be honored!

With you, I have been groping
Thru the shadowy diaphanous curtain
Of confusion of the known and the unknown
Of fusion of dark and light
Of complication of wrong and right
To sift from the experiences of living
A philosophy of life
That will be a suit of armor for me
To face life
To find from the experiences of living
A better understanding of life
An understanding that will bring happiness
And a GOOD LIFE
Not only for myself, my family
But for ALL HUMANITY.

In "Petals of a Rose"
You meet one
Who has been with you
Probing in the enigmas of existence
To discover the riddle of the Universe
The mystery that shrouds the Flower of Life.

In me, as in you
The same longing, yearning, straining
Searching, striving...TO KNOW
The same inner searching, the same torment
Of the heart and mind and soul
For...TRUTH.

In me, as in you
The same passionate desires of flesh
The same temptations
The same straining to pierce
The inner consciousness
The same wish to discover
The underlying motives
For the complicated reaction in human behavior
The same futile beating
Of the wings of the Spirit
Against the Cage of Human Existence.

The same questioning of how and why
The same inability to comprehend human behavior
The same embarrassment as a human being
To see vicious, prejudicial acts of brutality
Of Man toward Man
The same rebellion
Against Man's inhumanity to Man
Against Man's selfishness, aloofness
Indifference, complacency to Man's sufferings
The same rebellion
Against man's prejudice, intolerance, hostility
Injustice, perfidy, cruelty
Hatred of Man toward man!

The same eternal struggle
For adjustment of self to constant change
In this ever-advancing World
The same impotency of ability
To understand or cope with or assuage
World problems.