

The
Little Book of Dance

by
* Steven Curtis Dance

The Little Book of Lance
By +Steven Curtis Lance
Published through Lulu Press, Inc.

Copyright © 2005 +Steven Curtis Lance

Book Design and Layout by
integrativeink.com

All rights reserved by the author. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the author.

As the Little Book of Lance comes out
No braggadocio for me
The self-promotional spout and shout
That do-si-do of vanity
Strikes me as base buffoonery

But celebrating inwardly
Quietly then this book will become
In transcendental victory
My handbook and my vade mecum

When I go out I can show it to
Friends when I meet them and maybe you
In the way my mother taught me
Modestly and with dignity

And may the arrogant relent
If I have seemed so I repent
Pride has chased but has not caught me
For first and last I am but dust

Though I could never tell you why
I write my life down since I must
I live I write and then I die
To give The Little Book of Lance a chance

Table of Contents

The Little Book of Lance.....	v
Prologue	1
Dancing Monkey.....	2
Transcendental Sonnet #1399 An Honest Gift of Love.....	3
Bumblebees and Butterflies	4
Some of My Hair Will Still Be There.....	5
Mortality and I Agree	6
Transcendental Sonnet #1400 Speaking Silence	7
Transcendental Sonnet #1401 Faraway Friend	8
One of Those Little Surprises	9
Summer Solstice Song.....	10
The Moon and Me	11
Jasmine	12
Transcendental Sonnet #1402 Failure	13
Circle.....	14
Transcendental Sonnet #1403 Buoyancy	15
Without.....	16
How You Haunt.....	17
Lonesome Train	18
Transcendental Sonnet #1404 Saturday Sad Smile	19
The Existential Question Shared	20
A Call to Resistance	21
While I Was Sleeping.....	22
Transcendental Sonnet #1405 Independence Day	23
Bicycle Starlight.....	24
Dharma.....	25
As Night Falls Hard.....	26
Happy Birthday to the USA	27
Reply to a Left-Handed Compliment.....	28
And We Will Smile Awhile Before We Go	29
I Ask No More for Love.....	31
Goodbye My Love.....	32
Checkmate.....	33
A/trophy	34
Transcendental Sonnet #1406 Almost Midnight on the Fourth of July	35
Transcendental Sonnet #1407 Midnight	36
We Will Get Through This Somehow	37

No One No More	38
All Roads Lead to Rome	39
United	40
I Triumph Today.....	41
Transcendental Sonnet #1408 I Too Am an American	42
Your Lock On My Liberty.....	43
Candle of Our Hope.....	44
Before the Tide of Time Bears Me Away	45
I Am Going to Win Somehow	46
A Somewhat Unusual Song	47
Under the Dog Star.....	48
How the Best Get Better.....	49
Satori	50
Satori Sonnet.....	51
Dancer	52
Climb	53
Adventure.....	54
Wheel.....	55
Transcendental Sonnet #1409 Hot	56
This Bronze Moon of July	57
Home	58
We Will Meet You in the Moonlight.....	59
World War III.....	60
A Beautiful World Worth Dying For	61
Free	62
The Way it Was	64
Late.....	65
Where Dreams Begin.....	66
Whisper.....	67
Burn	68
Starlight.....	69
Shrinking Violet.....	70
So Late it Was Early.....	71
Outside	72
A Teachable Moment of Clarity.....	73
Patricia Lance Forever.....	74
Hope Becomes Hope	75
A Place for Me?	76
Gag Order.....	77
In Your Face.....	78
If Only	79
Two for One.....	80
Come.....	81
This Riddle Love	82
Future Embrace.....	83
Falling Forward	84
Ride Lucky Little Bastard Ride.....	85
Faces	86

Sprout 87

Looking Up..... 88

Summer into Fall..... 89

Epilogue 90

The Little Book of Lance



I have written five big books and now it is time for a little one, a handy collection of my latest and best poems: just for fun.

I have been surprised and delighted to discover that not only is my poetry understood, it is enjoyed in far distant places all over the world. This makes me very happy!

Therefore, with all my love, I would like to offer this little book as a heartfelt gift of my humble gratitude, to all of you kind and thoughtful readers who have been so good to me and given me so much: just for you.

Special thanks to my son Stevie II, for his cover painting which somehow manages to illustrate all of the poems in this book in one image, and to Stephanie Killen, who has designed this and all my books so wisely and so well.

I give you then this present, The Little Book of Lance: just for fun, just for you.

I hope you enjoy it.

Love,

+Stevie

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.

Prologue

I like poetry
To be orderly

I do not expect
To be understood
And as I get good
At it more reject
What I try to say
Anyway I see
As they turn away
And they turn on me

Witticism yes
Verbal winks and such
Criticism no
Thank you very much

Yes I will confess
I am sensitive
To insults some give
In the name of God
Or country or tribe
It always sounds odd
To shout sacred things
In a diatribe

(As the cuckoo sings)

I like poetry
To be orderly

But that is just me

Dancing Monkey

Once I was told the world was waiting for me
I think it has given up and gone away
Now none adore me and many abhor me
They accept my calls but expect me to pay
And you might agree it would all seem to be
A ridiculous joke in rather poor taste

Whoever is in charge must find me funny
A wanderer walking through a world of waste
Rooting through the rubble looking for money
And able to find less than nothing at all
Neither funny nor money but meaningless
Humpty Dumpty should confess and take the fall

Some cosmic idea of a prank I guess

Evolution or creation
These cruel clever strings I cannot see
Which control this situation
Have made a dancing monkey out of me

Transcendental Sonnet #1399
An Honest Gift of Love

My new book is black with a picture of me
On the front and the back in the middle
The letters of the title shine in gold
With my name in foil as the fruit of my toil

The design is suggestive of riddle
And of the secrets those black covers hold
For adventurers whose curiosity
Would lead them astray from the commonday bland
To enigmas of my heart drawn by my hand

I would give everyone my book if I could
Hoping that somehow I might be understood
Something new for the few for those with a true
Heart open hand open mind to understand
An honest gift of love from me to you

Bumblebees and Butterflies

Bumblebees and butterflies
Bumble and flutter by me
Each morning to greet the sunrise
And they never deny me
Their bumble-fly company here
In the late spring of the year

Still after summer's dawn when spring has gone
It is not very hard in my backyard
To see life bumbling and fluttering on
No matter what goes on with humankind
Through greed and folly cruelty and war
Bumblebees and butterflies pay no mind

The lower we sink the higher they soar
Their actions speak more than our words can say
In my eyes bumblebees and butterflies
Could teach humankind to live better someday
Reminding us not to leave balance behind
In the fall as we all bumble-fly away

Some of My Hair Will Still Be There

Some of my hair is no longer there
Not completely missing from one place
Just a little bit from everywhere
Plenty left with which to frame my face
And I will never lose any more
Thanks to my doctor and the drugstore
Finasteride not suicide for me

I mean to live well and all I can
I must age but would do it gracefully
A kind and thoughtful old gentleman
Meaning well avoiding hell and sin
Living according to long-term plan
Having given up cigars and gin
The horse races and gambling places
Never allowing the house to win

Last night some stranger or another
Mistook my young friend for my brother
I see better living through chemistry
And a vegetarian diet
My life is successful if quiet
I might live to see a hundred maybe
And some of my hair will still be there

Mortality and I Agree

Time wakes me as gravity shakes me
I get older with each passing day
And I might as well just accept it
It is either that or pass away

And should I presume to reject it
Then I would see it rejecting me
To be so bold as to not get old
But never to get ahead as dead
Time will never stop until I drop
Will not wait no matter what I say

So I say go ahead bring on these days
As well as everything this lengthening
Of days brings I accept it let it be
But do not choose to lose my childish ways
An old-souled child whose curiosity
Makes me go with the flow where it takes me

Transcendental Sonnet #1400

Speaking Silence

So there we stood face to face
Not future nor past at last
At the same time and same place
And speaking silence followed
Louder than a startled shout
A pregnant pause which swallowed
Whatever remained of doubt

So there we go at least we know
A thing or two of me and you
We both did our best on the test
At least we went on with the show
And until then we never knew
So there we stood and there we go
Late-season blossoms red and blue

Transcendental Sonnet #1401

Faraway Friend

Faraway friend there is nothing we lack
Nothing divides us not distance nor place
Time-travelers you forward and I back
Both east and west and up and down with grace

Two souls who understand themselves are free
To navigate transcending time and space
To understand each other and to be
Together whether noon white new moon black
Or any of the shades of blue between

No matter how we soar we cannot fall
And only we who know know what we mean
We rise and set together with the sun
And with the moon we wax and wane as one

My friend you are not faraway at all!

One of Those Little Surprises

A stalagmite in my freezer rises
Formed drip by drop up from the frozen floor
This is one of those little surprises
Which lacking a cogent why and wherefore
Can only make us ask and speculate
As to what it might mean as it is seen
Growing daily as relentless as fate
Inscrutable and cold and crystalline

Today it is beginning to prevent
My access to the coffee can behind
It seems so serious and so intent
Upon its growth as if possessed of mind
I touch it with respect in greeting when
I visit as intruder to its lair
Have tea instead and leave the coffee then
I know not what it means: but it is there

Summer Solstice Song

The longest of seasons
The season of the sun
For so many reasons

The best

And now it has begun
Not a moment too soon
Both bright sun and full moon

Attest

Longest day shortest night
The season of the light
By which now everyone

Is blessed

Summer! Come shine on me
Whether bright moon I see
Or blazing sun that we
All of us now may be

Refreshed!

The Moon and Me

I have followed the moon from night to night
Have tracked her sky to sky from near to far

Like me she is a fugitive in flight
Choosing to stay where the mysteries are
By cover of darkness soft and sable
The moon and I have always been able
To do what we please and bring to their knees
The arrogant who think they know better

And we two utterly confound them by
Moonbeam and letter breaking the fetter
Of ignorance and narrowmindedness
Which they would use against the moon and I
Could never understand their ways unless
These fools imagine they can bind the sky

Well they cannot and they forgot that we
Are pretty slippery the moon and me

Jasmine

Tasting sweet apples in my mouth
Inhaling roses from the south
While summer wind plays in my hair
No far no near but only here
No fair no unfair and no there
No up above no down below
No past no future and no fear

This is it this is all I know
More than enough for me in which
To be complete and to be rich
Call me a bastard or a bitch
Call me whatever you want to
But your hollow heart will haunt you

Jasmine tea is enough for me
My jasmine blossoms bloom at night
In my backyard by full moon light
Open your eyes and you might see
Open your heart and you might feel
This is it this is what is real

Transcendental Sonnet #1402

Failure

Once I was believed to be anointed
To do important things before I die
Then I was fifty and disappointed

A failure who could only speculate
Somehow I knew I would never know why
This is that special cruelty of fate
Causing us to wonder as we blunder
Searching for some answer as the cancer
Eats away today and then tomorrow
Is our last and still there is no answer
Which is because there simply never was

So what is left of me? This poetry
Thousands of poems which I leave to you
Debris of a dream which never came true

Circle

I went through a phase
In my younger days
Of saying outrageous things to see
What those more mature would think of me

They never thought much
But then it was such
An unoriginal device
They never needed to think twice

Just some kid trying to be shocking
They sighed as I thought I was rocking
Their world with my originality

But I was just another bore to be
Dismissed with a sigh
I never knew why

Until kids started doing this to me

Transcendental Sonnet #1403
Buoyancy

It would now appear that I cannot stay
Suicidal for much more than a day

The waters of my life get really rough
But when I wind up sinking far enough
To hit the bottom I bounce up again
Absurdity through buoyancy takes pain
Away a day or so into the gloom
And I laugh alone in a lonely room

But better lonely room than lonely tomb
From lonely womb through fifty lonely years
Absurdity has wept away my tears
Has kept me afloat somehow until now
And I never could have stood it unless
It all had not been so ridiculous

Without

Who was she
Who was I
Who were we?

Why Why Why?

What does it mean
What was what was
What might have been?

I wonder because
I cannot forget
If ever not yet

I am sure she has forgotten
All about me now

No doubt

Lesser me the misbegotten
I must live somehow

Without

How You Haunt

I wonder if you ever
Think of me
Do you think it was never
Meant to be?

We called it fate
But that was before
Love felt like hate
When we were no more

Then love blew away
On the wind
Of a bitter day
At the end

Now I want
To kiss you and say
I will never forget
How you haunt

I miss you today
Do you ever regret?

Lonesome Train

Lost and faraway lonesome train
I love to listen to your song
When I hear you I dream again
Of one I knew but do not know
The one I lost the one I long
To see who is but cannot be
Of whom the memory burns strong
I feel like you sing just for me
A distant echo of my pain
We may be lost but we are free
To weep together lonesome train

I never knew but I know now
That she is just like me tonight
I hear you through the clear moonlight
And I can hear her sing somehow
You may be lost but I have found
Her voice again within the sound
Of your song as you sing I see
Her face again within the moon
I know we are together still
And always will come very soon
I love her and I always will

When I hear you I dream again
Lost and faraway lonesome train

Transcendental Sonnet #1404
Saturday Sad Smile

My young friends speak of battle
Of warfare of the spirit
I see they are not cattle
And so I smile to hear it

Armed only with my wounds though
The passion of poetry
They know well I do not know
And that is enough for me

I have embraced this and that
Through the years and through the tears
Now I just embrace my cat
With a sad smile face my fears

Only poetry and pain
As the world turns round again

The Existential Question Shared

Why does it hurt us to exist?
Is it like this for everyone?
Could it be some better resist
The pitfalls of life sun to sun?

Is this the effect of abuse
Suffered individually
Or the scar-tissue and debris
Of all our collective refuse
Suffered as a society?

Are these feelings equally real
To everyone or do we feel
Them all somehow more acutely?
Relatively? Absolutely?

Although we might well never know
Since we exist let us persist
Wander and wonder as we go
In this existential question

Others whether by suggestion
Or example can help us grow
I know it is better to be
Together my friend you and me
So much unknown not borne alone

And the total is the sum squared
The existential question shared

A Call to Resistance

The people have been torn in two
As war wastes life and drains away
The future's hope from me and you
A stain of blood descends to stay
The proud hand which holds suffering
And leads but to decline and fall

Proud they sowed but harvest will bring
Disgrace unless we soon and all
Stand free to see the prophecy
Fulfilled in us and turn away
From masters dark with cruelty
That stalking death no longer slay
The young that what could be would be

The path of peace has overgrown
Restore the road which leads to light
That madmen might be overthrown
Before there comes no end of night

Does no one still believe in peace
Enough to struggle for release
From this cold stranglehold of pain
And would we see our womb our tomb?
Our last best hope at dusk of doom
Is that we find our voice again:

Resist the grasping grip of gloom
Speak truth to power and scour the stain