

The Prairie Light Review

Volume 22
Number 2 *Aspirations*

Article 21

Spring 5-1-2002

Vietnam Memorial: Mirror of Life and Death

Mary Ellen Durbin
College of DuPage

Follow this and additional works at: <http://dc.cod.edu/plr>

Recommended Citation

Durbin, Mary Ellen (2002) "Vietnam Memorial: Mirror of Life and Death," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 22 : No. 2 , Article 21.
Available at: <http://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol22/iss2/21>

This Selection is brought to you for free and open access by the College Publications at DigitalCommons@COD. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Prairie Light Review by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@COD. For more information, please contact koteles@cod.edu.

Vietnam Memorial: Mirror of Life and Death

by Mary Ellen Durbin

Looking up
I walk
 down
 down
 down
Into the valley of death
 down
 down
 down
Bearing the yoke of our grief
I walk
 down
 down
 down
into the well of our loss
 the loss of our certainty
 the loss of our innocence
 the loss of our youth

Looking up
in the book of loss
I take down the names of our most personal loss:
 Kent Erickson William Madsen
 1968 1969

Looking up
I scan
the granite landscape and I find Kent
 no longer blonde and eager to carry his M-16
 just his name, frozen in granite
 rock-hardened in our memory at 19
 “He’d be 53 now,” I say

Looking up
I see myself in the mirror of life and death
 connecting us across
 the chasm that can never be bridged.

Looking up
I see my redemption
 in remembering
 in forgiving

