**For Dave and Those Who Have Gone Before**

*January 11, 2006*

One step was all the balm your torment asked,

Descent and earth’s receipt would swallow woes.

Pain casts off her sting and death his mask,

Once bones are crushed and blood no longer flows.

Sometimes too much of life becomes too clear,

Old friends have come too close or gone too far.

And men’s applause does nothing for the fear,

That mirrors show things as they really are.

There come no tears, no frowns, nor smile, nor laugh,

Another Soul has died before the man.

Another life has drifted down the path,

We often cross yet never dare to plan.

One step from desperation and from grief,

One step beyond the moment brings relief.