

Hope's Flicker

By Alex Felker

An explorer of the forest dark,
A valet of the mansion stark,
What claims can one man make another?
When it is only I who leaves a mark.

The great machine, the great un-clean;
The desert, jungle, lakeside scene.
The setting is of no earthly mind—
It's the same milk upon which we all must wean.

Yes, a soldier blood-stained,
Too, a prisoner chained.
Upon what standards does fortune judge?
Her alms, her wounds, her all-ingrained.

We search, we strain, we contemplate,
We "Hang it all!" and leave to fate.
A shadow here, a hope's past there,
All fall upon John Locke's blank slate.

I raise my head, they join me then;
The fish, the bees, the mice and men.
We plod along, with upturned eyes
And yet, I say—we'll find ourselves again.

Where are we left? What can we do?
We'll sail together, across this ocean blue.
For am I not right by your side;
The world, as well—to start anew?