

## On My 18th Birthday

I was nearly the quintessential overdose.  
The booze and "party favors" took me oh-so-close.  
Revived so that prison wouldn't become their lot,  
Had I died I'd have been left in a dumpster to rot.  
But I didn't have to die in that back parking lot.

After a year in recovery, AIDS dressed as love came to stay.  
But, for the first time, I did it my sponsor's way.  
I didn't sleep with him until a year and one day.  
Then, in fear of commitment, I ran away.  
His was a tragic young death,  
And I'm still here today.

Years of relapse and I was no longer the one to whom A.A.'s tipped their hat,  
But the intended overdose failed, and I didn't have to die like that.  
If I'd died, I was sure they'd all be relieved,  
After all, I'd been trouble since the day I was conceived.  
By this cunning disease, I'd been horribly deceived.

I didn't have to die a pathetic actress, who drank herself to death in the public eye,  
But will I be sober when I die?  
The odds are against me,  
The history of alcoholic death goes on endlessly

I have to fight for it every day.  
It's simple, but not easy, this 12-step way.  
The painful leveling of my pride,  
Columns that pull out what's inside,  
Yes, the housecleaning can be hard to do.  
But, for me, the only way out is through.  
What makes it all worth it is my connection to you!

Sometimes I wonder what He saved me for,  
And then life opens a beautiful new door.  
Sometimes I pour out my heart just to be dissed,  
But then feel uplifted by my gratitude list.  
All in all, the love in these rooms is NOT to be missed!

So, when I want to feel love, I give some away.  
That often sees me through a difficult day.....  
Sometimes I just dance my blues away.  
What am I trying to say?

I'll be forever grateful that I didn't have to die "that" way,  
Or I wouldn't be celebrating with you today,  
The gift of love that we call, "A.A".

Janet H., Costa Mesa