

The image shows a book cover with a white background and a thick black border. The title 'Andy the Astronaut' is written in a black, sans-serif font. 'Andy' is on the top line, 'the' is on the second line, and 'Astronaut' is on the third line. The author's name 'By Anne' is on the bottom line. The background features a light blue sky with several purple, spiral-like patterns of varying sizes. A small black circle is centered at the bottom of the cover.

Andy  
the  
Astronaut

By Anne

## Table of Contents

### Stories

- **Andy the Astronaut** **Pages 2 - 26**
- **Model and Diamonds** **Pages 27 - 34**

### Poetry

- **I'm Glad** **Page 35**
- **Sometimes** **Page 36**
- **You Have Your Life** **Page 37**
- **Feeling Sorry** **Page 38**
- **Maybe** **Page 39**
- **If Not Quite Right** **Page 40**
- **Friends** **Page 41**
- **Enjoy** **Page 42**

# Andy the Astronaut

## Chapter 1

### School for Moon Beams

My O My

Is this real or sci-fi

I see a full moon

With black clouds floating by

And out of the clouds

Comes Little Bo Peep

With at least

Thirty black sheep

And they all sprout wings

And fly to the moon

A whole bunch of things

You will see soon

“OK, enough daydreaming,” says Lois to herself. “Pay attention to what’s going on in school.”

Later, at lunch, at a restaurant near their high school in Queens, NY—

“These French fries are good,” says Alice. “You know, I wonder how that English test will be.”

“I don’t think it will be so bad,” says Heather. “Did you watch that movie on TV on channel 4 at 8 last night? Wasn’t it good? After all those problems that couple had, they finally got married.”

“Yeah,” says Alice.

And Lois keeps thinking, “I’d love to go to the moon.”

Later at home, as Lois does her math homework, “You know,” she thinks to herself, “If I study math and science, maybe I’ll be an astronaut and go to the moon. I wonder what it would be like living on the moon.”

Lois keeps thinking, “I’d love to go to the moon. However, I’m not supposed to be so ambitious. I’m supposed to want a boring job like being a teacher because it’s a good job for a woman.”

“I could learn typing and shorthand and be a secretary. Then I could get into mostly any field. However maybe I could meet a guy who is interested in outer space and we could work together.”

“I know I can do anything I want to do—like have Tommy. Wonder what it would be like to be in bed with Tommy. What about in bed with Tommy on the moon? Really cool! Better chill and do my homework.”

I look in my book. It says Moon Station 101—Astronauts Tommy and Lois.

“Tommy,” I say. “Look at this sand here on the moon. I sink into it as I step. And it’s green. They say the moon is made of green cheese.”

“Don’t eat it,” says Tommy. “But look at that sign ahead of us with an arrow pointing straight ahead. It says ‘Rock Concert.’ Let’s go Lois.”

“Yeah, Tommy. I can hear the music from here. Really cool!”

As we get closer and closer, the music gets louder and louder. Then—everything stops.

“Let’s get out of here,” says Tommy. “Something’s wrong. It looks like the cops are checking out everyone.”

“I wonder why. Do they do drugs on the moon? But I can’t walk anymore, Tommy. I’m sinking deeper and deeper into this green sand. It’s up to my waist now. What do I do?”

“Finish my homework! That’s what I’ll do!”

Next—I start thinking about tomorrow at school. There is a new sign above the school’s front door: SCHOOL FOR MOON BEAMS. I enter the building and walk inside. The kids all have halos of light above their heads and the floor feels so soft. I look down. The floor is green sand.

Later at lunch in the restaurant, where everything smells like cheese—

“These French fries smell good,” says Alice. “You know, I wonder how that English test will be.”

“I don’t think it will be so bad,” says Heather. “Did you watch that movie on Channel 4 at 8 last night? Wasn’t it good! After all those problems that couple had, they finally got to the moon.”

“Yeah,” says Alice.

And Lois keeps thinking, “I’d love to go to the moon.”

After they eat, they walk out of the restaurant. And there’s Tommy.

“Look what I have,” says Tommy to the girls, “a potato gun.”

He pushes the gun into a potato, pulls it out and shoots a piece of potato. No one is interested except me. What I find fascinating is that the potato is green.

I wasn’t the only one fascinated. There was Irene, who was passing by.

“What’s that?” says Irene. “Oh, a green potato? I wonder if it will make green French fries.”

“I don’t know,” says Tommy. “But I have a whole bunch of green potatoes. I got them from a green truck driver selling them from a green truck.”

“Why don’t you come over my house after school,” says Irene. “We’ll make green French fries together.”

“OK” says Tommy. “Will do.”

“That bitch,” I’m thinking. “She’s been after Tommy for so long.”

## Chapter 2

### After High School

The next morning—

“Ring...”

“There goes that alarm,” says Lois. “I dream about high school and about going to the moon. What I really would like is to get out of my parents’ house and go back to college. I went to the University of Vermont for one year. But I didn’t do so well and my father didn’t like my boyfriend, Sal. Although I broke up with Sal and he graduated and went into the ROTC program in Germany, my father refused to send me back to school. He would get very angry and kept saying, ‘You were flunking out. You were flunking out’. Not true. I was on probation and could have gone back.”

A year after I left school Sal came over my house to introduce me to his pregnant wife. I truly wish them happiness. But my father still would not send me to any college.

I then became interested in laboratory technology and wanted to study it. I had a girlfriend who had studied it for a career and loved her job. So, my father sent me to a trade school to study laboratory technology.

That’s where I met Tony. Tony was my teacher. And was I naïve. I was twenty years old and naïve. Tony, to get on my good side, told me he would get me into college. And since he was my teacher, I believed him. I figured I would work as a laboratory technician and at the same time go to college.

Looking back, Tony was full of it. And he did not get me into college. He didn't care about me. All he cared about was sex and drinking. To make matters worse, I had an undiagnosed case of manic depression, now usually called bipolar disorder.

"I know something's wrong," I would think to myself. "But what should I do? My parents don't believe in psychiatrists. When I asked my mother a few years before if I could go to a psychiatrist, she said, 'That's just for rich people.' "

In those days there were no phone numbers to call and speak with someone. So, I told Tony I was going to go to a mental hospital and ask to be admitted. He said, "You do that and you'll be raped by the orderlies." So, I didn't. But I couldn't handle school anymore and I dropped out.

But since I had untreated bipolar disorder, I just got worse and worse. My parents saw this and I would get lectures from my father. Well, that didn't help.

So, what is manic depression or bipolar disorder? It's called a "mood" disorder. You alternate between being depressed and being manic, between depression and mania. However, the term "mood" disorder is misleading because what you are going through are more than "moods." They are "states of mind." And there is no reasoning someone out of it because it is not an intellectual issue. It's like telling someone who hasn't slept well for days that he should not be sleepy.

Finally, my father did send me to a psychiatrist, Dr. P, but she was the wrong person for me and I did not get better. And I wasn't happy going to her. However, my parents insisted I go. So, I did.

My father, then, at my request, sent me to secretarial school to learn typing and shorthand. After graduating, I worked in an office and soon went to Hunter College at night. I paid for college with my salary from work.

### Chapter 3

#### Warren

Soon afterward, I met my future husband, Warren, at a dance and we started going out. He “acted” as if he were madly in love with me. Yes, I say “acted” because the only person Warren was madly in love with was Warren.

And I was beside myself. Dr. P was just not the right doctor for me. She wouldn’t give me a diagnosis. All she would say was that I was “very sick.” And she didn’t give me medication. There is no way you could treat my bipolar disorder without medication.

I told her Warren wanted to get married.

“What do you think?” I would ask her over and over again.

All I got was silence. The only exception was a one sentence answer she gave me once. I don’t even remember what it was.

Anyway, I decided to get married.

The good part was that we were going to live in Italy where Warren got into school. And I loved Italy. Even better I was getting far away from Dr. P.

The bad part was I got married to Warren.

And Warren was only interested in the money we received as wedding gifts. He spent the whole wedding night counting the money we got, after the guests had left.

However, I survived it all. One week later we boarded the ship to Italy. Once we set sail, it happened—the abuse.

For a wedding present I had gotten Warren a light blue shirt which I thought would look very good with his dark coloring. I presented Warren with the present in our cabin on the ship. Warren was not happy with it. I don't remember why, but he was not pleased with it, so he punched me in the arm. That did it. I never enjoyed sex with him again and I would not have sex with him for a long time.

However, after a few weeks I gave into his demands for sex. I was able to manage this by just pretending he wasn't Warren but somebody else. And it worked. I still didn't like sex, but I could handle it. And I had my pick of which imaginary guy I was having sex with.

Warren continued to punch me and he was always yelling at me for something. I tried so hard not to yell back, but I couldn't help myself. I felt as if I were being attacked and I had to defend myself. And sometimes I was attacked, attacked with punches.

But living in Italy was wonderful. We also traveled a lot by train and bus because we didn't have a car. We traveled throughout Italy and Europe. I also went grocery shopping in Italy and I learned how to cook. I had studied a little Italian on the ship coming to Italy and later at home, so I was able to get recipes from the shop keepers when I bought their food. The stores were mainly mom and pop stores.

But I wasn't completely happy with the marriage because I was constantly being yelled at and punched. Then I started thinking of having a baby. I had always wanted a baby and I thought that a baby would bring Warren and me closer together.

I talked to Warren about having a baby and he was all for it. Getting pregnant was the only time I liked sex with Warren. I was delighted when I got pregnant and we decided to go back to the States to have the baby. There I took natural childbirth lessons and had natural childbirth. I also nursed for 23 months. My daughter, Sherry, was the light of my life. We took her back to Italy when she was just over one month old. But the yelling and punching did not stop and I didn't know what to do about it.

Warren was a good student in school and got top grades. When he graduated, we went back to the States to live. He took more exams when we got back and later became a psychiatrist.

But our life together was a disaster. I suggested we go for marriage therapy, but Warren refused. He said to me, "the problem is with you."

However, when Warren had his private practice, I was his office manager. At the same time, I went back to college. I was also cooking like crazy because Warren was a very fussy eater and he did not know how to cook or fix a meal. Don't know how I managed it all, but I did.

However, although I was Warren's office manager, he did not pay me. So, after I graduated college, I had no money for graduate school and Warren refused to pay for it. So, I didn't go at that time.

At that point Sherry was living a distance from us, but she had come in to see me graduate and to go to my graduation party. She then went back home.

Sherry finished college two years after I did, but did not want to go to graduate school. She worked in a veterinarian's office and enjoyed her work.

## Chapter 4

### Andy, My Fantasy Lover In My Fantasy Life

As for me, I have my fantasy life. My fantasy lover is Andy, a graduation present from me to me. When I graduated college I met Andy, who is six feet tall with wavy blond hair and blue, blue eyes. He graduated college with me, standing right in front of me.

“Congrats,” we say to each other when the graduation is over.

“Are you going on with your education?” I ask him.

“Yes,” he says. “Are you?”

“I hope to at one point,” I say. But not right now. What do you want to study?”

“I want to be an astronaut and fly first to the moon, then maybe to Mars.”

“Wow,” I say. “I’d love to do that too.”

“What did you study in school?” asks Andy.

“Well,” I say, “as much as I would love to go into outer space, I did much better in English and Art than math and science.”

“Well! What do you know!” My best friend majored in visual arts and he plans on designing space ships. Maybe you could do something like that.”

“Wow! That would be wonderful! I will look into it.”

In the car going back home after graduation, I said to Warren, "I want to go to graduate school to study more art and then someday design space ships."

"What! You have neither the brains nor the talent for that."

"I got A in all my art courses in college."

"You have neither the brains nor the talent to go on in school and study art. Besides, I need the money to buy a new car...Ow!!

"What's the matter, Warren?"

"I keep getting this pain in my chest. I think I'd better go to the doctor."

"That's a good idea, Warren."

Well, Warren did go to the doctor but he did not want to talk about it. He just told me he was having mini strokes and it was time for him to retire. Somehow, I didn't think that was the whole story.

But since Warren retired and I had been working for him, that meant I retired. That meant I had Warren home 24/7 and he could be very bossy. The only time Warren wasn't bossy was when he was sleeping. And when Warren was sleeping, I had all the time in the world to spend with Fantasy Andy.

Andy, Andy  
Sugar Candy  
By the beach  
So sweet and sandy

We went to the beach  
In his convertible car  
Seeing the sea  
Stretching out so far

Seeing the waves  
Break onto the shore  
While hugging Andy  
More and more

“Andy, Andy  
What do you say?  
Let’s go to the beach  
Most everyday”

“We could go  
Elsewhere too  
So long as I am  
Next to you”

“Lois, Lois  
That’s fine with me  
Just being with you  
Makes me so happy”

“Thank you, Andy  
I feel that way too  
There’s always a kind  
And sweet word from you”

“But now I must sleep  
Before morning’s light  
So long for now  
So long and good night”

## Chapter 5

### Fantasy Andy And Warren

Well, I did get up with morning's light and put up the coffee. I would make sunny side eggs on whole wheat toast for both Warren and me when he gets up. Meanwhile, I am watching the news on TV while having orange juice and a few crackers and then drinking my coffee.

"You make very good coffee," says Fantasy Andy.

"Thank you, Andy. It's always a pleasure making coffee for you."

"You know, Lois. The weather is so beautiful outside. Let's go for a walk in the woods."

"I'd love that, Andy."

So, hand in hand we go for a walk in the woods.

We walk and walk  
Hand in hand  
Through the wonderful woods  
So gorgeous and grand

With the colorful leaves  
Falling off of the trees  
In the autumn sun

And the gentle breeze

It's so perfectly peaceful

Spending time with you

And I know Andy feels

The same way too

"Where the hell are you, Lois?" screams Warren. "Why aren't you making my breakfast? I've been calling you and calling you."

"Oh, sorry, Warren. I didn't hear you. I'll get right to it."

"You're just as bad as my mother," says Warren. "All she would make me for breakfast was hot chocolate."

"But, you know," Warren goes on, "it's a good thing I bought all that insurance from the guy downstairs last year or we would have nothing to live on."

"Yes," I say, "I remember. It was lots of insurance. It also pays for my psychiatric therapy."

I then bring out breakfast and we both eat. Just as we are finishing up—

"Ring," goes the doorbell.

It turns out to be the insurance agent checking up on us. He is making sure Warren is really sick. He says sometimes people claim to be sick, collect the insurance, but they continue to work off the books for more money. The insurance agent finds Warren finishing up breakfast in his pajamas.

We talk about the fact that Warren can't work. Also, that I can't work. After about ten minutes of walking, I'm exhausted. I tried working in a home goods store and I couldn't manage it. I then tried working in an office in a children's' hospital and I couldn't manage it. I'm also taking large doses of medication for a mental illness. The meds also can make me very tired.

After a while the insurance agent leaves.

It's now time to clean up the dishes and table. Warren gets up and goes to his computer for I don't know what. I'm in the kitchen alone with Fantasy Andy. Andy helps me clean up the table and put the dirty dishes in the dishwasher.

"Andy," I say, "did you ever become an astronaut?"

"Almost," he says. "I try and help out with some problems from my home office. Did you ever move forward with your art?"

"Well, I paint and I write but I don't get much chance to do either. Do you think I could do some of that stuff from your home office? Do you have room?"

"Yes," says Andy. "I have plenty of room. And I have space ship pictures of the outside and inside of a space ship. You could design and paint it.

"Maybe tonight we could go to your home office," I say. "You know, after I'm in bed."

"OK, Lois. I look forward to it."

"Lois!" I hear Warren scream. "Where the f—k, are you? Can you fix this bed. It's a mess and I have to rest.

“OK, Warren. I’ll fix it. It won’t take long. Then I have to go to therapy.”

“It’s a good thing you have the medications you need. Otherwise, you’d be even worse. And it’s also good that I can find you the best doctors.”

Later on in therapy, my doctor tells me, “It’s a good thing your husband is a psychiatrist or you wouldn’t be getting the right treatment.”

## Chapter 6

### Fantasy Andy And Lois In Florida

It's now night. Warren sleeps. And Lois tiptoes to Andy's place and into Andy's bed.

"Andy, I came here to paint but instead I'm in your bed."

"It's good to have you lying next to me, Lois. You make me so happy. You are the love of my life."

"And you are the love of my life, Andy. I never hear a mean or unkind word from you."

"Maybe you will find a few hours to paint in the next few days or nights. I put some pictures on the table for you to see."

"I saw them, Andy. And I have colored pencils that I think is the best medium for that type of work. I'm so excited to get started."

Andy and Lois hug and kiss and it's all wonderful.

That night the two of them spend the night in bed. But for the few nights afterward, Lois spends her time decorating space ships inside and out under the supervision of Andy.

Then Andy hears from his boss in Florida. They want him to go down to Florida to help work on a flight to the moon.

“Lois,” says Andy, “can you come to Florida? You can just spend a few hours each night with me. I’ll send you there and back with my special computer. It will only take a few minutes each way.”

“Of course, I’ll come,” says Lois. “I’d love to and going to the moon is something I’ve always dreamed of. Maybe at some point we will both go to the moon together. And we will be in bed together on the moon. And we will make love on the moon.”

“You know,” says Andy. “I wonder what my boss would think of that?”

## Chapter 7

### Life On The Moon

One week later in Florida, Lois and Andy are getting ready for their space flight to the moon.

Lois puts on her space suit for the first time.

“How do you like it?” the office people ask her.

“Very sexy.”

“What?” they say.

“Just kidding,” says Lois. “It’s very comfortable and I can move around easily.”

“Good,” they say. “We will give you some activities and see how you do while wearing the space suit.”

“OK,” says Lois.

Well, Lois passes the space suit test and so does Fantasy Andy.

One week afterward, the two of them are in their space ship and off to the moon.

10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1- Blast Off!

“Andy, that was fantastic! We should reach the moon in an hour!”

“Yes, Lois, we’ll then walk on the moon. But don’t overdo the excitement. Just chill.”

“Chill--Andy we are going to the moon--My dream come true.”

In 58 seconds, they feel “bump.”

“We’re here, Andy! We’re here!

They then do their walk on the moon. Very carefully they walk out of their space ship and put their feet on the ground on the moon.

“Just as I expected,” says Lois, “green sand. I wonder if it’s also green cheese.”

“Don’t be silly, Lois.”

“I’m not silly. I’m hungry,” says Lois.

“When we go back to the space ship, we’ll eat,” says Andy. “Meanwhile, we’ll just look around.”

And they walk and walk looking at the bumpy, sandy ground and the rock formations all around them.

“Look what I see,” says Lois, pointing, “yellow arches and underneath – McDonalds. I’m dying for a burger, French fries and a coke.”

“OK, Lois. This moon trip is going to be fun.”

So, they eat under the arches a scrumptious supper. Then Lois says, “It’s about time for me to go back home and go to bed.”

“OK, Lois, let’s board the ship and fly away home.”

And they do. Lois goes to bed. “That was lovely,” she thinks to herself.

## Chapter 8

### Back With Warren Next Morning

“Will you get up, Lois. I want to eat breakfast.”

“I’m tired, Warren.”

“Get up and make breakfast.”

“OK.”

“You know, you’ve been in a daze these last few days. We might need to make some kind of change in your meds. I’ll have to call your doctor.”

“I’ll have your breakfast ready very soon. You know, Warren, I really would like to go back to school.”

“No way am I going to pay for school. But you can take courses online or on TV for free.”

“That’s a good idea, Warren. I think I’ll do that. I really would like to learn how to design space ships and space equipment. But maybe I can get a job just by passing the company’s tests.”

“Where is breakfast?”

Here it is, Warren. I’m bringing it right out.”

The two of them eat breakfast in silence.

After breakfast Lois says, “Warren I’ve been thinking. I would like to end this marriage. I’m going to a lawyer for divorce.”

“That does it,” says Warren. “I’m calling your psychiatrist to increase your meds. Maybe you need some additional meds.”

“Maybe I need a new psychiatrist.”

“OK,” says Warren. “But I will only allow the ones I approve of.”

Warren then eats a piece of cracker and starts coughing and choking. It gets worse and worse. Lois calls 911. The paramedics come, dislodge what he is choking on and bring Warren to the hospital. Lois goes with him in the ambulance. Warren stays in the hospital and Lois takes a cab home.

The next morning Lois drives to the hospital. The doctors need to do several tests. Afterward they tell Lois that Warren needs to be in a nursing home when he leaves the hospital. Lois goes along with their decision but Warren is unhappy. There is a good nursing home nearby, where a few days later Warren is admitted.

Lois visits him every day and feeds him his dinner.

Warren is not doing well. After two weeks he is in hospice. Three weeks later he dies. When Warren entered hospice, Lois started arranging the funeral. It was a lot of work but she got it done.

Now, after the funeral, Lois gets some well-deserved rest and sleep.

## Chapter 9

### Lois Thrives

Finally, Lois is on her own. She is relaxed and calm. No more stress and being bullied. All her neighbors see the new person she has become. Her psychiatrist cannot understand it.

Lois is determined to make a life for herself. "I want to be ME," she says. "ME-ME-ME. I want to be true to myself. I want to redecorate my apartment the way I love it. 'A woman's home is her castle.' First, of course, I have to get the legal paperwork done concerning Warren's death."

One year later, "It's done. Everything is done, the paperwork and the apartment. My life now is my own. I shall share it with the people I love. My daughter, Sherry, is the first on the list."

Sherry heard of a job opening in a furniture store near her mom. She told her mom, who was thrilled, saying, "I'd love to get a job working with other people." And she got the job.

The customers would ask her if she has any experience with interior design. Lois would say, "yes," thinking to herself, "after all, I decorated my own apartment."

And Lois would also continue designing space ships. She took art lessons online and soon went online and in person to get her Masters in Visual Arts.

Lois frames some of her artwork and hangs them in the furniture store.

Customers buy her paintings as well as the furniture. And Lois has the last word as to what her paintings cost. Lois is ecstatic with her new life.

One day she walks down the aisle in the furniture store. At the end of the aisle is a gentleman with his back toward her. He is about six feet tall with wavy blond hair. He turns around.

It is—no-- it couldn't be—yes—it is ANDY! Yes, ANDY with the blue, blue eyes. They look at each other and smile.

“Andy,” says Lois, “so good to see you. Are you working in the space program going to the moon?”

“Yes, I am. And you, Lois, are you designing space ships?”

“Yes, I am, Andy. Yes. Yes. Yes.

## Model and Diamonds

### Chapter 1

#### The Coffee Shop

I'm a twenty-year-old lady walking down the street. It's dark. I hear footsteps behind me. I walk faster. I still hear footsteps behind me.

My bus stop is coming up. Should I stop at my bus stop to wait for my bus or keep walking? I decide to stop at my bus stop. The footsteps stop right next to me—a cute guy at the same bus stop, just he and I.

I don't watch him but I can feel him watching me. The bus comes and we both board an empty bus. I board first, pay the fare and sit down. He does the same thing and sits right next to me. I can feel him staring at me.

"Hello," he says. "My name is Jon."

I don't say a word or even look at him.

"Bam! Bang!"

A car plows into the bus. The bus driver, the cute guy and I are able to run out of the bus.

"Are you all right?" the three of us ask each other. We're all right.

The driver goes to look over his bus. The cute guy says to me, "It's raining now. Let's go into that coffee shop over there and get a cup of coffee."

I say, "What coffee shop? There's no coffee shop here."

"Yes, there is, right next to the bank."

It starts raining harder and the cute guy grabs my arm and we run into the coffee shop. We sit down at the counter.

"By the way, my name is Jon."

"Yes, you told me. I'm Mary."

We look around. There is no one here except Jon and me. No one in the shop and no one behind the counter. And all the shelves are empty and there is no food.

"What a strange place," I say. "And I go to the bank next door and I never noticed this place."

"Let's get out of here," says Jon.

We run for the door. The door is locked! We can't get out. The lights go out. It's completely dark.

We walk around a bit and then notice a light from a doorway with a door that's almost closed. We open the door and enter an elevator that goes to Floor No. 13.

"Floor 13," says Jon. "This building from the outside didn't look tall at all. I'm pressing button 13."

So, we get to Floor 13 and then leave the elevator. The lights are on. We see sewing machines all around and plastic models wearing the latest style clothing.

“Look at this model,” I point out to Jon. “Isn’t she pretty wearing a lavender dress and her right hand on her hip.”

I walk away looking at the other models while Jon walks over to the lavender dress model.

“She is pretty,” says Jon. “But her right hand isn’t on her hip. It’s her left hand.”

“No,” I call out, walking back over to her as Jon looks at me.

“What! Jon look! Now both her hands are on her hips. What’s going on here?”

“Hello,” says Model Lavender. “What’s your problem?”

“You can talk!” I say.

“Of course,” says Model Lavender. You can talk too. What are you doing here?”

“I can ask you the same question,” I say to Model Lavender.

“Me, too,” says Jon.

“I’m from Adanac, a small country between the US and Canada,” says Model Lavender. “The dressmakers here make clothes that fit me to sell to the general public.”

“I never heard of Adanac,” says Jon.

“A lot of people haven’t,” says Model Lavender. “It’s a small country full of diamonds. I stick the diamonds in my bra and smuggle them here to the US.

“Don’t they show sticking out in your bra,” says Jon.

“Not if I wear a padded bra,” says Model Lavender.

“Anyway,” continues Model Lavender, “Ralph, my partner in the US, keeps me here under lock and key. He has a crush on me and he also likes the diamonds. The coffee shop downstairs and the dressmaker business are fronts.”

“Wow,” I say. “Now what? We are all locked up in this building. By the way, is this a new building? Never noticed it before.”

“Yeah,” says Model Lavender.

“And we are all locked in here,” I say.

“Yeah. But don’t tell anyone what I told you or we’ll all be in trouble. And it wouldn’t be a bad idea if you both would start working in the coffee shop.”

“And why should we do that?” says Jon.

“For the diamonds,” says Model Lavender.

## Chapter 2

### Floor 13

Well, things worked out pretty well. Since both Jon and I live alone, nobody missed us that night. And there are beds and a bathroom on Floor 13. Also, a fridge with cookies and soda.

It is now the next day. “Bang, bang,” go some doors. And there he is, Ralph, I assume.

“What the f—k is going on,” he says. “Sylvia,” (formerly known as Model Lavender) “are these your friends?”

“Yes, Ralph, and they want to work in the coffee shop.”

“OK, you can help us fix the place up. What are your names?”

“Jon and Mary,” I say.

“OK,” says Ralph, “there will be a truckload of furniture and equipment arriving soon. The two of you will bring it in.” And he leaves.

“Sylvia,” I say, “what do I tell my boss about my job?”

“Just tell your boss that your cousin died unexpectedly and you have to take over his business.”

“I have no problem,” says Jon. “I’m between jobs.”

“All right, guys,” says Ralph coming back in the room, “the truck’s here. Move it.”

Well, Jon and I worked all day, but we didn't see any diamonds. I'm beginning to have second thoughts. Sylvia must have read my mind because she says to me and Jon, "OK guys, I have diamond rings for the both of you after a week of work."

"OK, Sylvia," I say. "But I'd like to eat too. All we've been eating are cookies and soda."

"OK," says Sylvia, "we'll order in. No problem."

"Good," I say. "And I'd like to get washed and change my clothes."

"No problem. We have plenty of clothes and towels and soap."

"You know, Sylvia, do we really have to wait a whole week for those diamond rings?"

"Yes," she says."

## Chapter 3

### The Job

“Jon,” I say on the second day of work, “what do you think of this job?”

‘It’s OK. I don’t have anything better to do and we’ll be getting diamonds.”

“We’re gonna be painting the place too. And people are coming in looking to rent some of the apartments here. And what will we do after all our work is done?”

“Listen,” says Jon, “we’ll be working in the coffee shop and collecting diamonds.”

Well, we worked and worked like crazy. On the sixth day Ralph sends Jon and me out of town by train to pick up some small items.

When we arrive at our stop, we get off the train and look for the store we are going to. We can’t find it. We ask around. Nobody’s heard of it. We call Ralph. No answer. We call Sylvia. No answer.

“I guess we’d better go back,” says Jon.

“Yeah,” I say. “What else can we do?”

So, we get on the train and go back. We go to the coffee shop and we don’t see Ralph or Sylvia. We go to Floor 13. They are not there.

A man walks in the room and says, “what are you doing here? You don’t belong here.”

“We are looking for Ralph and Sylvia,” says Jon.

“Never heard of them,” says the man. “Now get out of my apartment or I’ll call the police.”

We leave.

## Poetry

### I'm Glad

I'm glad to see  
You're doing fine  
Even though  
You're no longer mine

Gone are your kisses  
Gone is your touch  
Gone is your love  
That meant so much

Both of us found  
Other things to do  
That meant much more  
Than me and you

I know it's my fault  
I pushed you away  
Is there anything more  
I can do or say?

But you like your life  
And I like mine  
It just gets lonely  
From time to time.

**Sometimes**

Sometimes in life

We must choose

What to gain

And what to lose

I gained the life

Of my dreams

But where are you?

Gone, it seems

Gone, it seems

Gone, it seems

But I still hold you

In my dreams.

**You Have Your Life**

You have your life

I have mine

And maybe that's all

Perfectly fine

Perfectly fine

Perfectly fine

I just miss you

Most of the time

Most of the time

Awake and in bed

I cannot get you

Out of my head.

## Feeling Sorry

Stop feeling sorry

For yourself

You're living the life

Of your dreams

Nothing is perfect

And we must choose

What's best for us

It seems

In fact, we are happy

With our life

Although we are not

Husband and wife.

**Maybe**

Maybe we just

Must wait and see

What the future for us

Is going to be.

**If Not Quite Right**

Sometimes life

Doesn't seem quite right

So, I work life out

Day and night

Day and night

I work it in my head

And make life wonderful

Wonderful instead

I can be tactful

At turning things around

So, we all feel

Safe and sound.

**Friends**

I'm glad you're my friend

Friends we'll both be

You are you

And I am me.

**Enjoy**

Enjoy your day

In your own special way

And I'm glad you read

What I wanted to say.