

## The Boy He Could Not Save

I saw a strong man pause to cry  
And asked what caused him pain.  
He drew a breath and this replied,  
“The boy I could not save.”

I knew this man, he never lied,  
He never spoke in vain.  
It came then as a great surprise:  
A boy he could not save?

His character was true and wise,  
His record bore no blame.  
I hoped he would identify  
This boy he could not save.

I gently probed, he blinked and sighed  
But would not give him name.  
“Just look into my eyes,”  
He said, and then he strode away.

I'd looked into his steadfast eyes,  
Reflected on his fame.  
I saw a strong man forged in fire  
Who deftly bore life's pains.

For many months I sought this prize:  
To know the boy he claimed,  
To know the secret of his eyes,  
To know his sigh and pain.

Who was this poor boy who had died?  
This victim of life's flames—  
It was, of course, the child inside—  
'Twas *him* he could not save.

You see, a strong steel's forged in fire,  
For man it's just the same.  
The price of strength is sacrifice—  
The child cannot be saved.