

December 2002

Some call it "isolation .."  
I call it "sheer Paradise."  
Some say leaving here is "the great escape." I  
say it means my sure demise.

This place I lovingly call "The Rock"  
Is more than a house on a plot of land.  
It's my heritage full of cherished memories, laughter, joy, and contentment. I'm  
certain it was placed here by God's kind hand.

Appraisers use sales comps to determine "just value"  
As required by state legislated methods for assessing earth. I  
just thank God they're not bright enough  
To measure its value to me, its true worth.

So for now I will gaze as the northeast winds  
Drive snow wildly across this open space And I  
will muse 'neath the clear starlit skies  
Of the priceless treasured memories held by this place.

I will stroll the sandy beach  
'Cross the rocks into the Cricks  
Where I'll catch minnows and dig the best damn clams  
And have bonfires before "they" get in their last licks.

I'll swim in the icy waters,  
Find crabs hiding 'neath the seaweed,  
Build wharves by hand with my brothers,  
And maybe on a tuna as we ply the sparkling open sea.

I'll take sponge baths in the copper kettle,  
Gnaw on Dad's dried salt cod,  
Dance a little jig or two 'round the fire  
Whenever I can, by God.

I'll find horseshoe crabs in the mud; I'll  
sit high in the Trident's crows nest; I'll  
sleep in my Dad's bunk  
Where I always get the best rest.

I'll round Deer Point from the pulpit;  
I'll bask in the sun when it's warm;  
I'll have picnics and play tic-tac-toe in the sand;  
I'll watch the tide come and go and contentedly yawn.

I'll marvel at the handmade friendship quilt,  
The old victrola and records,  
The handhewn beams, pegs, and horsehair plaster,  
The old hotel pictures, deeds, and obscure records.

I'll go haying with Uncle Ed and George,  
Drink cold well water from the bucket.  
I'll sit and lament with my hands on my knees  
As I perch over yet another bucket.

We'll play croquet and badmitton,  
Have a wrestling match or two,  
Maybe play air hockey or a fierce game of Uno,  
But darts I just cannot do.

I'll sip a drink 'bout 4PM  
And toast my Mom so very dear.  
She entrusted her beloved Sunnyside home to me  
And like her, it's taxes not death that I fear.

The state, town, and IRS obviously  
Don't share my ideals or care what transpires. If  
things get any more heavy-handed,  
For me the results will be dire.

If I had all the money in the world,  
They'd be more than welcome to it all any day.  
But strip away one inch of my Rock?  
That's a price I just cannot pay.

So I will endeavor to find some way  
And do whatever must be done  
To save my Rock, all it was, and all that is me. Do  
otherwise? Might as well be my setting sun.

So this I ask, dear God -  
Please keep this Rock and me as one  
Until the roll is called up yonder  
And my life here on earth is done.