

# Survivor's Notebook

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## APPRECIATION

ONE OF OUR most common failures as members of this society we call mankind is our lack of appreciation for all the mundane encounters we experience every day. We have become complacent and perhaps selfish in taking for granted so many wonderful aspects of our lives. This is immediately brought to our attention by the sudden loss of, for instance, our electricity and the comforts we derive from the use of it. Many of us can remember those days before electricity was available and what life was like without the blaze of light so common in most areas now. We were comfortable with our lives in those days, yet when similar conditions are forced on us now, we cry and moan about a return to such primitive situations.

Something else that deprivation brings about is the spirit of sharing, and a feeling of sympathy for those who suffer most from it. We are moved to help others during times of disaster; wouldn't it be nice if we were so moved everyday of our lives rather than simply taking it for granted that someone else will take care of the problem?

We have showered ourselves with enormous comforts that are so commonplace as to be ignored. We rise in the morning knowing that the newspaper is in our driveway; the latest news about what is happening all over the world is just a quick click away; the delicious aroma of freshly perked coffee fills the air; and breakfast of our choice is quickly at hand. We bathe in water at a temperature of our choosing and dress comfortably in clothing that requires little care. The sun is well above the horizon before we leave home for work and has not yet set on our return. Does anyone ever pause during the day and reflect appreciatively on such living conditions? I doubt it.

It has been written that the mass mind of a people determines its fortunes. What if everyone paused for just five minutes every day and mentally expressed appreciation for the good things of life? And for the fellowship of friends and neighbors? And for the privilege of being able to express such thoughts freely?

Who has not thrilled to the music that surrounds us on all sides? There are untold numbers whose lives are enhanced beyond measure by the enjoyment of music, yet few of us take the time to be grateful. How sad that we have reached such a state of unconcern ... and how ominous the thoughts of what we may be inviting thereby!

I hope that everyone who reads this will join me in raising the level of appreciation in our world. As one of my cousins puts it: "*Life is wonderful; take what comes!*" #



This is the house that I wrote about—the one that I spent ten months helping my son-in-law to build. He lives in his house and I live with my scars.

## THIRTEENTH BIRTHDAY

By  
Betty Simmons

The hour that you've been waiting for  
Has finally arrived.  
You've turned the pages of the book,  
You've grown and you've survived.

As days of childhood fade away,  
You're in a brand new mode;  
A complicated time when you  
Assume a larger load.

Your hormones hit the fast lane now;  
Emotions in high gear.  
It's definitely going to be  
A fascinating year

With pimples, passion, parties, pain,  
You'll take it all in stride.  
Your family's waiting in the wings  
In case you need a guide.

More freedom now to move about,  
Decisions to be made.  
More choices complicate your life,  
But you won't be afraid.

Because you'll handle it with style.  
I know you have the means  
To make this time a special joy,  
This first year of your teens.

