## Sunday Morning—Eight Days Before Christmas, 2001

Suzanne Evertsen Lundquist

On death, I have thoughts That bread and water Can not satisfy: Because they are gone Jack, John, Eugene, and Ruth...

And soon my mother too Will rest her gnarled body Beneath the tree beside my father And I will not see her again, Nor try longer to break through

Her clouded mind and memory To ask her how to clip roses Or plant peas in the spring. Gone the meals of corn, and yellow Crook-necked squash

Creamed peas and new potatoes Sliced tomatoes and peaches From the vines and trees Behind the home, now sold Where she walked familiar and gathered in.

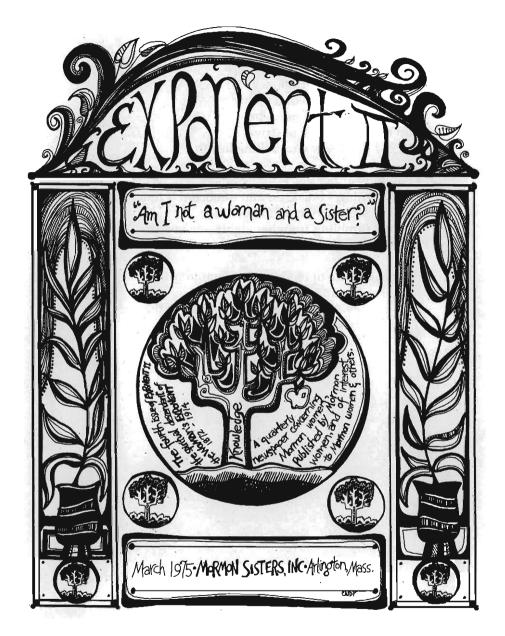
And dresses sewn and pressed To make her daughters beautiful. Hung memory-ready in her closets: Wedding dresses and coats Wool jackets and organdy skirts.

And all those lives she loved And cared for: Healing like few women can The care-worn and unfortunate Whose relief her society gave.

Grandma Sue and Dad Both died encompassed by her Ceaseless care; and now she Can no longer walk or drive The old Buick she won selling health.

I would hear her voice—long after This morning's breakfast and tomorrow's lunch Singing songs gathered in her voice Forever tumbling from her eighty-seven years. I would have her young, and here/hear, and never gone.

So speak to me of blood-red redemption Male-ready and heavy talk. I would have it simpler—the trimming of the tree The oven-baked bread and fruit-room jam And her, our mother, and him, our father: again.



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