

Little Emma

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I

Little Emma was born shy.
The doctor said her health was weak.
She didn't speak and made no friends.
An episode left her wheelchair bound.
She could not eat and made odd noises.
Her mother loved her and cared for her.
Sometimes she read stories to her.
The words were odd, but this didn't matter.
At twelve, she lost her mother.
They said a truck had crushed her.
A worker took her to an office.
Strangers adopted her.
They were paid some money.
She was not loved but not harmed.

II

Doug loved the lord but rarely spoke to him.
He lived in a small home.
When young, his wife had left him.
She did not say goodbye.
He often cooked pasta and ate alone.
The time for children had passed.
He liked dogs.
When he was forty-seven, his mother died.
He taught school but was distracted.
For fun he wrote essays.
Nobody read them.

I+II

Doug volunteered at the social office.
One day he saw Emma being wheeled in.
He adopted her.
She was twenty and he was fifty five.
They went to the lake together.
They went to the park together.
He read to her and she smiled.
She loved him as a father.
At thirty six she had a stroke.
She died and he buried her.
Every year he visited the grave.
He wrote more essays.
Sometimes he mailed them to editors.
None were published.
At sixty nine he died.
His essays were thrown away.

II+I

Doug once passed Emma on the street.
They did not notice one another.

I

At twenty she was moved to a home.
The nurses washed and fed her.
Nobody talked to her or read to her.
In time, they forgot her name.
At forty-two she had a seizure.
She could no longer see and her arm hurt.
Eventually, she died and was buried.
They wrote off the funeral expenses.

II

At fifty eight he lost his job.
He sold his house and moved.
While moving he fell.
The doctors cost money.
Soon he was poor.
At sixty three he grew sick.
They would not treat him.
After some time he died.
His possessions were sold.
Someone threw out his essays.