

# TO LOVE IS NOT TO POSSESS

*by James Kavanaugh*

To love is not to possess,  
To own or imprison,  
Nor to lose one's self in another.  
Love is to join and separate,  
To walk alone and together,  
To find a laughing freedom  
That lonely isolation does not permit.  
It is finally to be able  
To be who we really are  
No longer clinging in childish dependency  
Nor docilely living separate lives in silence,  
It is to be perfectly one's self  
And perfectly joined in permanent commitment  
To another--and to one's inner self.  
Love only endures when it moves like waves,  
Receding and returning gently or passionately,  
Or moving lovingly like the tide  
In the moon's own predictable harmony,  
Because finally, despite a child's scars  
Or an adult's deepest wounds,  
They are openly free to be  
Who they really are--and always secretly were,  
In the very core of their being  
Where true and lasting love can alone abide.