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## *And Where Does Your Neighbor Live*

Lala Heine-Koehn

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*And Where Does Your Neighbor Live*

## AND WHERE DOES YOUR NEIGHBOUR LIVE

by

Lala Heine-Koehn

Did I tell you about the people  
who live in the paper house?  
The rooms have walls of paper  
with a slit circa eight feet long  
for a door. They used to deal  
in drills, screwdrivers, scissors  
and all kinds of knives.  
They didn't like their business  
or perhaps they just decided  
it was time to retire.  
All the stuff is now in their house,  
their furniture is made out of left-  
over tools. And it is rather neat  
the way it looks: flowerpots  
balanced on bits, on the tips  
of knives; tables made of sawblades  
resting on half-opened scissors.  
As to the beds, I am not sure.  
They are covered with paper bedspreads

and I cannot tell.  
And I like their kids. They are cut  
out of paper, a row of eight with  
their arms connected, but each one  
of them has a different color  
of hair and is differently dressed.  
They are strung along the livingroom  
wall and are very lively, playing  
in the breeze.  
I like their house. You don't have  
to knock. The walls sway open  
on their own. And inside, the air  
is so good, smelling of grass  
and flowers drifting from outside.  
Each time I come to borrow a tool  
or to visit and chat I wonder, why  
so many people live behind walls  
of brick and concrete.

## In The Park On A Spring Afternoon

by

Lala Heine-Koehn

*Allow me, my lady*, he bows  
from the waist, acknowledging  
respectfully her white kid  
gloves, stepping aside,  
he holds up his coat tails,  
ushers her into the mausoleum.

Even the dust is hushed:  
orderly layers of graduated  
gray, as on the marble steps upon which  
a carved ebony box sits.  
*Allow me*, the coat tails murmur,

arranging the lady's hem  
as she kneels down to pray.  
Flicking a speck of dust  
tumbling down a wax lily,  
he retreats into a dark corner.  
*That she was*  
*that she was, gracious and kind*  
*loved by everyone*, he moves  
his lips, keeping an eye  
on the order of the dust.  
*My lady, it is chilly in here,*