

This Pond is Different

I pluck the little critters from the pool
because I see them drowning there.

One's a wasp – I fear a sting;
here's an ant – it could sting too.

An iridescent beetle from Japan?
Who wants that shiny green thing here?
But really, it's quite pretty, isn't it?

Why do this stupid thing when what I want
is merely this, my morning outdoor swim?
Critters have been drowning since the dawn
of time and since the birth of bugs and ponds.
It makes a difference to all of these.

And this particular pond is not the same –
a clean and disinfected swimming pool.
My fellow humans made it for my joy,
but still the critters want to drown in it.

The day I'm old and cannot swim no more,
will anybody pull me out of this,
the darkest crystal quagmire of my life?

Will there be an elephant
to wrap me in its trunk and lift me out?
Will there be a pack of wolves
to use their noses – push me to the steps?
Will there be a friend of mine,
to throw the only life preserver in?

But I'm too old to swim as once I could,
and I'm too weak to grab a rubber ring.
My partner wasn't trained to save a life.
"It doesn't matter; she was only getting old."

Yes, indeed, this crystal pond is different.
The critters didn't want to drown in it.

Leslie N. Sinclair, June 23, 2025

The title of this poem is a word-play on the title of a scholarly book, "This Time is Different." If you think you won't understand what is written in that book, please don't read it. It should come with a warning – "Hazardous to your intellect."