

# The Prairie Light Review

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Volume 46  
Number 2 *Spring 2024*

Article 37

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Spring 5-1-2024

## Night Walk

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### Recommended Citation

Blanco, Tania (2024) "Night Walk," *The Prairie Light Review*. Vol. 46: No. 2, Article 37.  
Available at: <https://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol46/iss2/37>

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## Children of Ashes

Mia Skaliotis

Ring around the Rosie. A pocket full of posies. Ashes, Ashes. We all fall down. The eight children all fell on the grass in a fit of giggles. Then they stood up and began again. Ring around the Rosie. A pocket full of posies. Ashes, Ashes. We all fall down. Their mothers were in their houses, cooking and watching the younger children. Fathers were at work. Then it was time to come home. The children were tucked into bed and kissed goodnight. The bell rang loudly over the town. Out came the woman with a tear stained face, cradling a cold child. There was only the sound of a shovel, lifting the dirt away from the pit. The children who sang and played stood quietly while they watched the diggers of the grave. The mother laid her child down. Ring around the Rosie. A pocket full of posies. Ashes, Ashes. We all fall down. The seven children all fell on the grass in a fit of giggles.

It was time for home and time for bed. They said their prayers and whispered goodnight. While mothers and fathers kissed their little heads. The clatter of the bell sounded throughout the village. Out came the man pushing a cart covered in dirty cloths. An arm fell out from under the cloth. The sound of a shovel was heard from not far away. The children then ceased their play. They stood quietly to watch. The man lifted a child from the cloths and laid him down. Ring around the Rosie. A pocket full of posies. Ashes, Ashes. We all fall down. The six little children all fell on the grass in a fit of giggles.

It was time to say goodbye to their friends. Time to eat their supper and then head on to bed. Mothers and fathers bade them goodnight, wishing them sweet dreams. For only the dreams of children are so sweet. Then they listened in fright as the bell sounded and it was heard by everyone. Who will be leaving tomorrow? Out came the parents of two children. The sound of a shovel was heard as they walked with their children in hand. The other children stopped and watched. The parents laid their children to rest. There were already bumps on them. Ring around the Rosie. A pocket full of posies. Ashes, Ashes. We all fall down. The four children all fell on the grass in a fit of giggles.

Home time came and their mothers called. It was too early, they tried to say, but the parents did not hear. They waited for the children to climb into bed, to kiss them goodnight on their precious heads. Then they stood in fear and waited for the sound they did not want to hear. Of course it did come and the deadly sound of the bell took its toll on the village. Out came the man dressed in black with the pointed beak. Bottles full of medicine clinked as he

Night Walk



Tania Blanco — Mixed Media Collage