

# The bamboo stick

*by* Erika Byrne-Ludwig

I no longer go for walks without my bamboo stick. Tightly held in my hand, thin and light, it beats the invisible particles which try to land on me and bite. My face is hidden as in shame under a rough gag, my hands are getting rusty, missing the touch of other hands. My skin cooks under the hot water, the soap and the gel. Thorny dreams ... which I would like smooth. I gaze at the horizon ... yes, maybe one day, when I, at long last, can reveal my face and fly with other wings, plant my bamboo stick into the soil, practise my magic on it, so that little by little it becomes a protective hedge against all the stinging midges.

