

18.

And kneel beside your honored grave,
I pray you'll understand:

The time will come when I will brag
About the deeds you've done,
But what it cost to own this flag
Will not be worth it, Son.

I'll always love you, that you know,
As I did in the past,
But now, the time for letting go
Has come for us at last.

Forgive me while I bow my head,
And just this once, I cry,
And finally get the whole thing said:
I love you, Son... Goodbye.

--Kenneth W. Johnson, Racine, WI

GRANDMA

Grandma was the only one
who ever loved me free.
There were no strings attached
to the love she gave to me.
Grandma's eyes were big and wise,
her face was framed in gray.
She would bounce me on her knee,
smile, and then she'd say:

Sonny boy with curly hair,
someday you'll be a man
but don't go chasing rubies
when there's diamonds where you stand.

Grandma's hands were soft and warm
to dust away my tears.
And when she held me in her arms,
they'd wash away my fears.
I would fetch her walking-stick
and we'd stroll down the street.
She would take me by the hand,
and say those words so sweet.

--Dennis John Ferado, New York, NY

MY GRANDDAUGHTER

My granddaughter likes looking through windows
When diamonds sparkle fleet in dewy grass;
And rubies budding smell as sweet as rose
Beyond that picture-frame of cold, clear glass.
In the twinkling of her eye flashes chrome or fairy:

19.

Morning's glimmer makes cars and spirits kin.
And she admires the face--coy but wary--
Of her pale reflection, of her ghostly twin.

Youth feeds on illusion, false hope, naive sorrows;
Age carefully plans for the days that remain.
Yet dreams are more vivid than prudent tomorrows
As she sits before the window pane.

--Andrea Abraham, Flagstaff, AZ

CINQUAINS FOR DUCKS

Eighty.
Sunlight glancing
from summer leaf, crewcut
lawns, and high-stepping in straight-edged
grass... ducks.

No pond
or water of
any kind for miles, but
the ducks spread out, two or three a-
breast, jay-

walk in-
to the street. Beaks
unhinge in a clamor
of quacks. They straighten, single file
step up

the curb
onto a new
lawn, orange legs lifting
in bright grass, quacks crinkling out of
their beaks.

--William Terrell, Lombard, IL



ODE TO A FLY SWATTER

The more the merrier
Does not apply
To certain insects
Especially the fly

A better axiom
Could be said
A good fly
Is a fly that's dead

--Leon H. Nunn, Santa Rosa, CA

In San Francisco, Halloween is reduniant. --Will Durst