

MANUSCRIPTS

grandfather

(waiting for papa to return)

Terry Anderson

an hour after the rain had fallen
it still clung to the air
in a loose misty veil
fireflies had come out
glittering against the night
like sequins set on a purple curtain
streetlamps stretched down the street
in an endless row
each circled by a sparkling halo

into this silent night
a small figure crept unseen by all save me
he passed the sleeping houses quietly
gently humming
a soft tune that had sat on his lips for many years
the baggy grey suit he'd worn through many nights
hung limply on his small bent over body
each thread was in place
his black shoes polished with love
a velvet hat crowned his head
small patches of fine grey hair
lay on his neck
beneath the brim
two eyes twinkled with the memory of yesterday and tomorrow
at his side a small woodgrained walking stick
swung back and forth keeping the meter of his dignified walk

i watched him disappear in the shadow of that night
somewhere down the endless row
far far away
closer to him than me
there was a light left on in the front room
waiting for papa to return