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## Gentleman of the Old School

Wilda Morris  
*College of DuPage*

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I am so sorry,  
I am grieved,  
here: scooter's leash.

Pt 2

Depravity seen not heard  
murderous herd of absurd gentleman  
formerly gentlemen but most  
turned off the path  
they found themselves  
a hearty pack of family  
and had a snack  
Quack quack quack goes the duck  
Johnny can you say quack quack quack  
Johnny say hi to mommy Johnny say hi  
Johnny oh no Johnny get a way from that man  
Johnny get away from that man  
The man held out a handful of stones  
then pour'd to the ground pure dust  
Johnny away from that man

Sandstone and limestone and they disappear  
it takes years and years but they all disappear  
The bums chant mad hatter things to say  
The bums chant and bum off me a cigarette  
Take the pack and slowly, I back away  
Have a nice day bums please just have a nice day  
Then I stray to the back alley  
and find 'er under the stair snoring  
while all this was happening and she was asleep

## Gentleman of the Old School

Wilda Morris

Dad polished my shoes,  
cleaned my glasses  
when I was a girl,  
carried my suitcase  
to the bus when I went  
off to college.  
For decades, when I drove  
home he came out  
to carry my luggage  
into the house,  
up the stairs.

He stands on the porch  
today, shoulders stooped,  
eyes heavy with apology  
as I unload the car.  
He wants to help me  
carry things in,  
but can't do it anymore.  
If I say, *It's OK, Dad.*  
*I don't need help,*  
it will be a knife  
through his already  
shattered spirit.

## Bedtime Symphony

Joan Sampey

Cue the chorus: Mom, do we have to?  
Four shoulders slumping, four eyes rolling,  
Then the crescendo of wild stamping, each  
Racing to splash first.

Hear the dissonance: Me first, me first!  
Two doors slam, drawers crash, toilets echo.  
A triumphant victor stakes his bathtub claim  
Laughing at the slower one.

Now the reprise: My turn, my turn!  
One shivering, sweet-smelling head emerges, as  
His sister impatient for a steamy bath passes,  
Pushing by her towel-wrapped twin.

Then a mother's aria: Are you finished?  
One deep breath before my chant: Brush-your-teeth-  
Wash-your-face-comb-your-hair-hang-your-towels,  
Repeating, but hardly heard.

Ah, the interlude: Read my story, no mine!  
Two pajama-clad bodies hurtle onto the couch  
Waving worn scruffy books to pile on my lap,  
Pressing into my sides.

Soon the day's sweet finale: Mommy, kiss me, kiss me!  
One son, tucked in tight, whispers soft secrets, then  
One daughter, cocooned in covers, nuzzles her pillow,  
Bowing as twilight's curtain falls.