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Gentleman of the Old School

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College of DuPage

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Morris: Gentleman of the Old School

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.