

## I Never Loved my Father Till I was Old

I never loved my father till I was old.  
When I was Child, and he Provider,  
Besieged by Dust and Great Depression,  
Forced to leave home to find work,  
Building homes from imagination to finished products.  
He came home exhausted; I pounded away on the piano.  
He rattled his newspaper and said, "Let it rest."  
I was a 6', 4" teenager,  
Did he think, "What good is he?  
What do Beanpoles do for a living?"  
Was he reaching out with his gift—a bicycle?  
He never reached out with words.

After I left home, he became Deacon, Teacher,  
Gatherer of souls for the Lord, full of joy.  
Admired and respected in his church.  
Cancer took him,  
I, 29, and he at 67.  
Seeing him on his deathbed,  
I did not grieve.  
Not respecting what was taking place,  
I did not understand Mortality.

Now he lives in my mind  
In places I cannot reach.  
Silent in death, he speaks.  
And I, in silence listen—and answer,  
"I love you, Provider.  
I love you, Papa."