

MY FATHER'S DAUGHTER

I am my father's daughter
Viewing the world on his wide, boney shoulders.
We prance through Central Park.
As I hold his uplifted hands.
Like reins urging him on.

It's a sunny day heading to the carousel.
We climb aboard.
He holds me on my horse
I grab for the brass ring, hand it to him and laugh,
"Daddy, Daddy we won two extra rides."

Sunday is the day I wake him and we wrestle in bed.
He holds me securely between his strong legs. I find it fun.
Yet I yell, *"Let go Daddy"*. He loosens his grip and I race for my room
Until I smell breakfast.

I'm eleven now with a day off from school.
He peeks above his newspaper wistfully,
Watching me leave for the movies with friends.

But Saturday is our day and we head for hardware and groceries.
Ladies chat with me but glance at him.
I bear this stoically and he treats me to the toy store.
We buy accessories for the dollhouse we've created together.

Today I'm sixteen it's Sunday.
We carry our easels to the park and paint.
I tease between strokes, *"Daddy, what will my husband be like?
Will he be tall, blond, rich?"* Daddy groans, I giggle.
"How will I wear my hair then? Should I wear it shorter?"
I twist it up and turn to him. He groans again.

I know he loves me very much
And I adore him.
I am his daughter
But only in my dreams.

My Father, my Daddy
Is a "could-have-been"
You see -
He died at 28 when I was two.

Dorothy Franklin
2nd Place – Adult Age Group