



WHAT THE DEAD HAVE TO SAY

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Cover Art by John Kotula

Origami Poetry Projects

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0-5-1-4
That birthday pops up like a lottery winner.
Jesse, yours, and mine,
We all rhyme
All those restaurant dinners
And all that social chatter
Couldn't hear a damn thing
Because of the dishes' clatter.
Let me mention
One more time
I've had a bunch of son-in-laws
There's been some competition,
Two times around
But of them all, even if there's more
Only you lead with the four.

4. Bob

Everytime you lead with the four
It's like someone knocked on my
door.
15 for 2, 15 for 4,
What a shame there isn't more.
I pay attention.
My body died,
But my curiosity survived.

1. Maizie

I smoked two packs of Camels today.
Unfiltered.
Every day since I went away.
They got every brand,
But, Honey, Camels?
I'm their biggest fan.

Didn't Miranda turn out fine?
Oh my Lord, Honey.
Do you think she'll have a baby?
Will she name it Maizie?
A middle name maybe?

Butch, Honey,
I'm so proud of you.
I'll be dead a long, long time.
It'll still be true.

2. Harriet

Look, the dead don't miss you.
It doesn't work that way.
No matter what you do.
No matter what you say.
We've got perspective.
We've got the long view.
I'm beyond being protective.
Even with Asa and Moshe,
There is nothing new.
Every story's an old one.
It's all been told before.

You miss me? Yeah, yeah.
My loss makes you weep?
What should I do for you?
Put a broom up my ass?
Give the floor a sweep?

3. Gerry

Yeah, I died with a bad attitude.
I died in a rage.
Your turn is coming.
Let's see how you close the book, turn the page.
Maybe you'll be polite where I was rude.
Go sweetly into that good night.
Accept it without a fight.
Take a bow
As the curtain comes down
Between the audience and the stage.

Even though some spots were rough
It all turned out fine.
So what?
That's not enough.
I was gyped.
I was robbed.
All those years
Should have been mine.
To do what I could to keep them safe,
To help them grow up strong.
Instead it all went wrong.
All along
When I was needed
I was gone.