

The Old Picket Fence

by George Albert Leddy

“Tear down the Old Picket Fence,” you say? —Well, no, I guess I’ll let it stay.
I’ll patch it up, and paint it white—I guess I’ll make it look alright.
You see that Old Fence means to me, a whole lot more than you can see;
It speaks to me of things I knew, when fields were green, and skies were blue.

It speaks to me of long ago, and yet, it seems but yesterday:
Just Ma and me, and Little Joe; our Little Joe, just turning three.
He had to have a place to play, where he’d be safe, and wouldn’t stray;
And so, I built that fence for him—a sort’o place, to keep him in.

And in the Spring, a tiny shoot, peeped from the Earth, to seek the Sun.
It seemed to know the Picket Fence would make a place for vines to run.
And o’er that fence, so white and clean, it spread a wealth of verdant green.
It seemed to know it held a grace, to help to beautify the place.

And very soon, in brilliant hue: violet and rose, and pink and blue;
As if to meet the coming day, the Morning Glories held full-sway.
And as the warm June days drew nigh, a tiny rosebud caught my eye;
And soon the Roses, rich and rare, sent their sweet fragrance, on the air.

Then later came our Little Sue, then Mary Jane, then Little Bill;
Then Little Ruth, who couldn’t stay—she sleeps out-yonder on the hill.
We used to gather there each eve, we felt she’d like to have us near;
But Mother’s sleeping with her now—I’ve been alone for nigh a year.

I see it now, that fence so white, the Morning Glories all abloom;
The Babes we loved a-playing there, the Roses in the month of June;
And Mother waiting by the gate, to greet me at the close of day;
To tell me all the pretty things, that she had heard the Babies say.

Ah, yes, I see it all again: the yard is strewn with baby toys;
The swing beneath the Maple tree, the dolls for girls, the carts for boys;
The happy children there at play—the children now, all gone away.
Ah, yes, I guess that we must be—content with life’s sweet memories.

I know we’re getting pretty old, that Fence and me, we’ve had our day;
So just a little loving-care, to keep us happy, while we stay.
I’ll patch it up, and paint it white—I guess I’ll make it look alright.
