

Villanelle

We Climb A Hill For Kip

- A1 We climb a fog-bound hill with son's ashes.
b We seek the warmth and the solace of sun.
A2 With each hard step our hearts and world crashes.
- a In our minds the death memory thrashes.
b We carry heavy burden of our son.
A1 We climb a fog-bound hill with son's ashes
- a Our living thoughts and his death thoughts clashes.
b Gyres of grief relentlessly begun.
A2 With each hard step our hearts and world crashes.
- a Reliving fatal call when hope dashes.
b Recalling sometimes we numb, sometimes stun.
A1 We climb a fog-bound hill with son's ashes
- a We walk with openly wounded gashes.
b Unseen bleeding from battle not yet. won.
A2 With each hard step our hearts and world crashes.
- a We carrying on as all our hope smashes.
b We have lost our beloved, golden one.
A1 We climb a fog-bound hill with son's ashes.
A2 With each hard step our hearts and world crashes.

Villanelle: French. 19 lines. Originally syllabic. In English often iambic pentameter which would be 10 syllables per line. 5 triplets and a quatrain. Line one is repeated as lines 6, 12 and 18. Line 3 is repeated as lines 9, 15 and 19. Only two rhymes. Refrain lines are A1 and A2.

Rhyme Scheme: A1-b-A2, a-b-A1 a-b-A2 a-b-A1 a-b-A2 a-b-A1-A2

Donald Justice varies line lengths and makes small variations in repeated lines. The following Villanelle is a tad wobbly in the syllable count.

City Tree

- A1 You grip the earth, alone.
b Bark girdled by concrete.
A2 Your seeds hit tombstone.
- a Seeds are released, then blown.
b buried by shoveling feet.
A1 You grip the earth. Alone.
- a Barren now, all hope thrown
b toward distant dirt retreat.
A2 Your seeds hit tombstone.
- a Limbs empty, birds have flown,
b roots curl in dark defeat.
A1 You grip the earth. Alone.
- a Branches hover. Below your brown
b leaves palm-pat the walk and street.
A2 Your seeds hit tombstone.
- a Leaves, cradles if seeds are sown,
b are caskets. They deplete
A1 you. Grip the earth. Alone,
A2 your seeds hit tombstone.