

Nields, Ash Wednesday

Daddy's on the back porch
playing with a blow torch
standing by the front door
Avon Ladies For the Poor
Meanwhile Mama smiles,
"Get your lover down the aisle
before he's gone";

Lisa says, "Don't cry;
I'll bring you flowers when you die
I'll go to school in only black
or maybe in a gunni sack
I'll get your friends to stand around
and dance upon buried ground
on our front lawn

But don't you worry;
I'm sure she's sorry
and doesn't mean that stuff about the aisle.";

Ring around the rosy
a pocket full of posy
ashes, ashes, we all fall down.

The test came back on Tuesday last
right before our pseudo fast;
Lisa said "it's heaven sent--
you can't give ice cream up for lent
Mama said I wouldn't last forty days,
but maybe two

So I spent the day avoiding mother
reading Dr. Joyce Brothers,
reading Where the Wild Things Are
and some of Plath's Bell Jar
Reading Daddy's tax forms
to see if it would be born
on Christmas Day

And I'm not weeping;
I think I'm keeping
a baby who will soon be half my age.

Ring around the rosy
a pocket full of posy
ashes, ashes, we all fall down.

Quitting smoking is a must,
ashes ashes dust to dust
try to turn a new leaf,
giving up pork and beef
Lisa says she'll buy me bras
and maybe I should join a spa
or take Lamaze

It's funny how you never know
exactly when you're asked to grow,
exactly when you take the load
or head up on your own road
Exactly which the day will be--
maybe Ash Wednesday
or Mardi Gras.

So I will change,

'cause I have changed--
time to put these combat boots away.

Ring around the rosy
a pocket full of posy
ashes, ashes, we all fall down.