

Jane Blanchard

Apologia

Decades ago, to my dismay,
My hair went dull, so I would try
To keep my former look in play
With what beauticians could apply.
The price for such was really high,
Charge after charge, which I did pay
While oversharing with a sigh:
The time will come when I go gray.

Self-coloring became okay
When I was barely getting by
With children left to raise (and they
Had needs and wants to satisfy).
A store-bought formula of dye
Washed any mousy tinge away,
Yet I knew whether wet or dry:
The time will come when I go gray.

Now paler shades are kept at bay
With nice'n easy—boxes nigh—
An extant brand, perhaps passé,
Though I can only wonder why.
How months, whole seasons seem to fly!
Old age is likely here to stay,
And certain thoughts preoccupy:
The time will come when I go gray.

Dear Jimmy, you as well as I
Still see me as a blonde today,
But once again I prophesy:
The time will come when I go gray.



One and Done

Your GP's office calls to offer you
 A routine wellness checkup, so to speak.
 You are to see the nurse, the doctor, too,
 At mutual convenience mid-next-week.

Once there, you figure out they want to test
 The fitness of your mind this day, month, year.
 Though slightly irked, you choose to do your best
 In answering the questions that you hear.

You exercise, eat well, and drink a bit.
 You neither smoke nor want to end your life.
 You sleep when you lie down, not while you sit.
 You have no living will, instead a wife.

That line gets you a laugh. You leave the nurse
 Assured that you remember "blue – bed – sock"
 And use your break from having to converse
 By watching all three hands of one wall clock.

Chitchat with your physician goes quite well.
 Church. Travel. Yardwork. Bricker—by last name—
 Supplies you both with compost—some soft sell:
 "The price of sh*t stays pretty much the same."

"Today's bill will be paid by Medicare,"
 Confirms the practice's receptionist,
 Who bids you come back next June, if you dare.
 You smile and say, "Perhaps." She gets the gist.

