Dallas

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DALLAS

Nineteen years ago today
A baby boy of three stood in wonder.
Mother!
Please don’t cry!
Why does the television hurt you so?
Head in her hands, she wept.
He just couldn’t understand.

The memory returns
Like a near forgotten photo
Of the fire that still burns.

Dad watched the motorcade, you know.
Even Walter Cronkite cried.
And a little boy of three
Watched his daddy’s casket pass by,
While another little boy of three
Saw his mother die inside.

Black wreaths bedecked our holiday.
Every pool was filled with killer’s blood.
‘‘Assassins!’’ they called us.
But mom was not an assassin.
She nurtured us like flowers
On a grassy knoll.

The flame flickers,
Then burns on.

Five months and two days ago,
A baby man stood in anger.
Mother!
You can’t die!
What of cherry blossoms and the eternal flame?
Will you not stand with me there?

Father shed real tears,
But Dan Rather did not cry.
Nor will the yellowed pages
Of an old Life Magazine
Recall her last day.
And I gazed blearily at a cold grey square.
Head in my hands,
And wept.
I just couldn't understand.

Dallas!
Marble monument on the plain,
Why am I going back to you?
In an open car,
I'm coming back
To you.

Drew Townson