

PETERBOROUGH

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It's 100 times more important, my lad

They sat together side by side,
The old man and the boy,
Grandad with his Daily Mail,
The lad with his new toy.

'It says in here,' the old
man read,
(The boy pricked up his ears),
'That lads your age can
now expect
To live one hundred years.'

One hundred years! The boy
looked up
And caught his grandad's gaze,
And in that moment, locked
in time,
Two minds went separate ways.

To eight-year-olds, 100 years
Just means eternity,
And Billy's mind was full
of dreams
That only children see.

He thought of all the things
he'd do
On life's triumphal ride,
And there'd be grandad next
to him,
For ever at his side.

He'd slay the dragons, fight
for right
And stand for what was good,
He knew these things would all
come true
For grandad said they would.
And reaching out across
the years



He touched the old man's hand,
But granddad's mind was
in a place
No child can understand.

For granddad knew how fast
time flew,
How lifetimes disappear,
He also knew, at 82,
The end was drawing near.

And as he held young
Billy's hand
He thought how time
had flown,
Since he'd been just a little lad
With pipe dreams of his own.

Oh, what a world he'd
conjured up
And oh how long life seemed
When he had sat on
grandad's lap
And fantasised and dreamed.

Then, choking back a
rising sob
That wouldn't be delayed,
He felt a tear roll down
his cheek
For all those dreams mislaid.

And Billy, sensing
something wrong,
Looked up in mild alarm,
Then edging sideways laid
his head
Against the old man's arm.

And in that simple act of love
So quietly carried out,
Grandad knew at last
he'd found
What life was all about.

For it's not the length of time
we have
Or things we might achieve,
What matters is the love
that's left
When our time comes to leave.

And so they sat there side
by side
In warm contented joy,
A little lad with his granddad,
The old man and the boy.

Jeff Potter, Yateley, Hants.