

Thanksgiving Multiplication Table  
*by Maggie Beyer*

A table for two is romantic ado,  
But not when Thanksgiving Day's heeded –  
This time of year, one thing is clear,  
A table for more is much needed.

For here come the cousins, arriving by dozens,  
Parents, and in-laws, of course –  
A leaf or two added, the table is padded,  
And extra chairs gathered perforce.

One child, then another, and then baby brother,  
Each year find they soon have a place –  
The table is filled, the gravy is spilled,  
As elbows all jostle for space.

A day comes too soon, when now there is room,  
The kids have been moving away –  
It's time to subtract, with less in the act,  
For hands held together that day.

Some years there's a space, that is hard to replace,  
And heads bow in sweet memory –  
But a daughter announces, as everyone pounces,  
"Next year, we'll be having a baby!"

Now here's a surprise, with a glint in his eyes,  
A son brings his bride-to-be home –  
Her parents? Okay. There's plenty today,  
With turkey for all 'neath the dome.

A holiday table, somehow is able,  
To close in, or open up wide –  
And as families do, welcome in each one, too,  
With a heart that is just the right size.