

A Boy Named JD Brown

By Marilyn Reeves

I walked along the path one day
Of what was to be my future home.
It won't be long now, I thought,
Before my time has come.
The place was peaceful, cool and green,
And rather than being frightened
I felt somewhat serene.

As I looked about the headstones,
A flash of color caught my eye.
Someone had dropped a red, red rose
On the path as they passed by.
I bent and picked it up
And held it to my nose,
There is no fragrance quite so sweet
As that of a red, red rose.

But as I was bending down
To pluck it off the ground
Something else my eye did spy.
A small stone sat next to the path,
It was really quite close by.
I looked at the engraving,
And aloud I said, 'Oh, my!'
The name I found inscribed there
Was that of JD Brown;
The date of his birth was '98
And he died in 2015.
So the person who was interred there
Was only seventeen!

What are you doing here? I said.
You're much too young
To be lying there,
Deep beneath the ground.
Why are you here? What happened to you,
My dear young JD Brown?

Did some terrible illness or affliction
Take you away too soon?

Or were you with a group of kids,
Driving recklessly around?

Perhaps there were drugs
Or alcohol to blame.
Or did you just give up in despair
And decide to end the game?

Did your mother weep for you
As all good mothers do?
Or was she selfish and neglectful
And turn her back on you?

Why are you here,
My dear young JD Brown?
Did you try to be a good boy,
But life just got you down?
Or did you lose your way?
Did you commit a crime one day
And it somehow all went wrong?
Did they tell you to halt, but you didn't stop,
So they just took you down?

Take care, you hear?
Perhaps when they lay me down
They'll place me somewhere near.
Then we can have a conversation,
And you can explain to me what happened.

I may never learn the truth about you,
For there's no way I can know.
But please accept this red, red rose,
It's the least that I can do
To try to make it up to you,
Someone who has died so young.
But for now, please excuse me
As I simply have to go.
I have to get on with living
Till the bell for me does toll.

I turned and walked back up the path
That so recently I walked down,
But I wiped away a tear as I thought about
That poor, young JD Brown.