

Poem for a Student: Beginning with Lines From His Test

BY LARRY GAVIN, FARIBAUT SENIOR HIGH

"The story is aptly titled
The happiness in his life was short."

A window opens to another world,
And the back desk is empty

Except for a single rose someone
Placed on the seat that was his;

A life he was making better
Consciously each day. A life that made

Me gather my family in my arms
After school and hug them so tightly

My own son shouted "Stop Dad stop."
And we laughed, the three of us, near

The door. October outside and Sugar
Maple leaves piled on the front step

That leads uphill to the wood
Beyond; leaves all around us

It seems, like solitary stars
That together make the night sky.

Tomorrow dawn will find
Us safe in bed. The beginning

Of another day. The memory fades
And the desk stays empty the balance

Of the term. Then what?
I will tell you what: Love the brother

That never writes; and the mother and father
That won't understand the real child standing

In front of them, and love the autumn
Sky, and the leaves that fall once

Upon a time. The way good stories
Always begin, and love the ever after

Happiness only guesses at—that may not
Last long in this world—or any other.