Red Kool-Aid On the Couch

Lex Zaleta

A bright young lad, smart as they come,
Played with big-boy toys, nothing dumb.
Blazed through grade school with high praise;
Left friends and teachers all amazed.Conquered every video game,
And every sport just the same.
A bright young lad, smart as they come.
Never known to do something dumb.Said, "Mom and Dad, I love you this wide!"
Then threw his arms out from his side.
All the liquid from his glass
Hit the couch with one big splash.Light blond-haired boy just sitting there
With that "didn't mean to do it" stare.
"Sorry 'bout that; I didn't think
I was going to spill my drink."His eyes clouded, then came the rain.
No matter how I scrub that stain,
I can't ever get it out,
That red Kool-Aid on the couch.He moved up and on to high school,
Where he thought the "high" part was cool.
Gave up sports and video games;
Watched his future go up in flames.One more bottle, and one more joint,
Till we all reached the breaking point.
There he sat in our living room -
Poster boy for impending doom.He jumped up from the sofa,
And his tall drink glass just flew.
"Here's a middle finger for you, Ma,
And, Dad, the other one's just for you!"With those angry words he left us,
Never called and never wrote.
Somehow, the Good Lord kept us
From drowning, kept us afloat.Years of dark clouds, and years of rain,
No matter how I scrub that stain,
I can't ever get it out,
That red Kool-Aid on the couch.Then one day, we got the call,
The call all parents dread.
"Sorry to have to tell y'all,
But we found your son dead."All the heartache, and all the pain,
No matter how I scrub that stain,
I'll never get it out,
That red Kool-Aid on the couch.

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