Visits with my cousin Jack
are never, ever boring!
He knew about a haunted house,
so off we went exploring.

The afternoon was sunny
when we started on our way.
But by the time we climbed the hill,
the day was turning gray.

Close up I saw the mansion
was not what I’d expected.
It looked so grand from far away—
not crumbling and neglected.

Ruins of a garden tended
many years ago
were now just thorny tangles
left to grow and grow and grow . . .

The shutters were akimbo.
Many windows had no panes.

"Let's go inside," said Cousin Jack.
He'd say "coward" if I complained.
Yet I felt the goose bumps rising
as we opened the creaking door.
Then we stepped into a scene
I'll remember forevermore:

Bats hanging from the high ceiling
in the huge entry room!
At first I didn't see them
through the thick dust and the gloom.

"Listen! Do you hear the ghost?"
whispered my cousin Jack.

I didn't answer back.
Then I heard a sort of swooshing.
Then I felt a sort of swish.
Was it the ghost?

Or the rush of the wind?
I wish I knew . . .
I wish . . .