

## Jack Erdie

### "Dreamsicle"

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He's out on the back porch again  
Beggin' to get in for the night  
Nearly broke down the door  
And woke the house  
If not the neighborhood  
I hear mama's mad, weary voice  
"What about that five-dollar bill?  
When you left it was gone.  
Now, I bet you know nothin' about that."

"Yes, I seen it," he said,  
"But I don't steal from my only daughter.  
If I'm lyin' I'm cryin',  
And there ain't a tear in my eye.  
I got thirty-five bucks  
For a paint job I done Junior Slaughter  
Now, I drunk it all up  
I cain't help myself  
Yes, I do try."

When you lie to your child to her face  
With that poker expression  
Well, she slammed the door right on his ace  
Bolted it, too  
He slumped into the swing on the porch  
And was snorin'  
To shut out the rumble  
I wound up my Whinny the Pooh

Then a scratch on the window screen  
Woke me and choked me with terror  
His shadow there looked like the devil  
Come after my soul  
But my grandfather's masculine voice  
Said, "Come here to the winder."  
Then he hand me five dollars.  
"Stick this in your poor mama's purse."

"Did you take it?" I asked  
With the candor a child gets away with  
"Well, I mighta," he said,

"But I done it for her and for you.  
Piney Finn cut me in  
On the start of a surefire investment  
That five there is profit  
Soon there'll be more comin' through.

"I better go check my investment,"  
He winked at me slyly  
Give grandpa a kiss  
His whiskery cheek scratched my face  
He turned with sad, broken smile  
Hobbled off to some bushes  
And fished out a brown paper bag  
From a fresh hidin' place.

When he didn't come back for a couple of days  
You could see the concern in her eyes  
"If he's tryin' to make me feel guilty  
Or worried," she said, "Then he'll get a surprise."

But I could remember the time  
When he'd let me climb up on his back  
Ride me that way down the hill  
To DiMaria's Dairy  
Buy me a dreamsicle  
Sing me an old army song  
And I knew that the time would return  
When he'd be his old self  
With his hair trimmed down close  
And his clean shaven face  
And the scent of Old Spice  
Ah, that'd be nice.

He's out on the back porch again  
Only after a month has gone by  
Stiff as a board with one hand on the swing  
And the other hand pressed to his side  
You can tell from his face it was painful  
Tho' the hurt has gone out of his eyes  
"If ya ask me," says Piney,  
"That bastard's as thirsty  
In death as he was when alive."

Now he's buried out in the back yard  
His stone's got a cross on the top  
But by moonlight it looks  
Like a bottle o' hooch  
With a corkscrew stuck into the stop  
And he whispers to me that his mouth is so dry  
There's no weeds growin' over his grave  
Coz I found a full flask

In the juniper bush  
And I pour him a drink every day.

If I'm lyin', I'm cryin'  
And there ain't a tear in my eye  
"If you're dyin', I'm buyin',"  
He lies to me, still.  
And I will always love him that way.

Buy me a dreamsicle  
Sing me an old army song.  
Buy me a dreamsicle  
Sing me an old army song.

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