

## Little Boys

Playing with matches was not smart  
But making me hold the match until it burned my fingers was  
A game of catch between father and son  
Each impact caused my glove hand to swell a little more  
One of the few times I saw him smile  
Beer stinks

Not a single music concert  
Learning not to care if he showed - came way too easily  
My belt complimented the band uniform  
His belt wounded my skin  
The welts tormented my self-respect  
Whiskey stinks

Older now  
The paddle was more effective - for awhile  
Hate and rage within, absorbed the pain as I smiled back at it without a flinch or a sound  
Its eyes couldn't hide that it knew - its power was dwindling  
The result of one little boy's new-found badge of courage  
Dads are cool, but  
Father stinks

Terminal cancer - not long to go - doesn't want to see me  
One final act of domination - one final disappointment - a welcome relief  
Even at this age - too young for these life lessons  
My pain too - soon to be gone  
Life stinks

Knowing the monster's history helps  
Parenting dispensed through a chamber of horrors  
Administered by *distilled* spirits  
Skills learned from his father - who learned from his father  
Still - blessed that this dark heart was transformed  
Family secrets stink

Little boys - pounding the keyboard as they sit on my lap  
Ball games - musicals - laughter - long walks and long talks  
All the little boys - building pillow forts - reading bedtime stories  
Enjoying a nice glass of wine  
While the littlest little boys sleep  
Solo business trips stink

## Bio

Dave Swett is a Vietnam-era Air Force veteran. His was a technical support role for the navigation and communication infrastructure between ground and air combat forces. Acquaintances made within the military remain among his best friends today.

Dave has been involved in the creation of technical training programs for over 35 years and has authored many training manuals for the heating and air conditioning industry. He became involved with the Warrior Writers over two years ago to help improve his writing skills and effectiveness and to build new friendships with others who enjoy writing. Free time is spent with family and friends.

Dave and his wife Lora have a passion for Great Dane dogs. They have enjoyed bringing special needs Great Danes into their home for over 20 years and hope to continue to be involved in that cause for years to come.