

**POEM**

## Family history

Glenn Martin

Beneath the silence, secrets,  
things deemed too hard to say.  
(Don't go out into the woods to play;  
I can't tell you why, just obey.)

As children we could take this to be protection –  
from danger, or sadness perhaps,  
but we grew older and were never made wiser,  
just at home with a false set of facts.

And the keepers of the secrets died,  
carrying with them the comfort  
that we were safe.  
But I say we would have been better  
in possession of the truth,  
however grave.  
There is something ground-worthy about truth,  
you can stand on it,  
as hard as it may be.  
The first thing is a place to stand.  
I can learn how to stand up straight.

But again – soften, think –  
this is how dark the woods were to them,  
full of hungry souls and angry ghosts.  
In dying they hoped to kill the secrets,  
for us, to save us,  
from danger, from sadness.

But I have dug up the bones  
and cried all the tears that were necessary.  
The monsters have departed.  
It is okay. It is okay to go out and play.

[This poem was published in the book, *I in the Stream*, G.P. Martin Publishing, 2016.  
See [Lulu.com](http://Lulu.com) ]