

The Vacant Room

I walked by an old schoolhouse today.
Roof was sagging, windows all shattered.
There were no doors, not a one to push.
I wandered in, bemused, and a bit tattered,
For I'd traveled far that day, up since dawn,
But I was curious, at the unexpected hush.

Walked into what had been a classroom
Filled with dry lectures and students' laughter.
Those were gone now, time had taken its toll;
An old desk there, and a well used blotter.
Crooked blinds still hung, cobwebs all around;
No chairs were left, only an old class roll.

Where are the scholars of yesteryear, I mused?
Where are they and what have they done?
Traces remained, an old button, a tea bag.
Ceiling all cracked, the paint long gone;
Dirty mirror, cracked, crooked on a wall,
Motes of dust in the air, in the corner a rag.

I stopped and listened, nothing could be heard.
Time had taken its toll; the present an intruder;
Just the past there, in that room, everywhere.
So I waited, contemplating what must have been
A place of learning, a refuge from chores at home;
But now a place that is nothing, nowhere.

- *The Vacant Room* © Leonard Yarbrough, 1999