



*Our comfortable California home quietly restores to order as five grandchildren
Leave their love behind after a bustling day with Grandma and Papa.
As I tiredly seek respite in an oversized living room chair,
I am cozily encircled by the countless Christmas decorations and traditions that soothe me.
Through drowsy eyes, I gaze at the grandfather clock standing regally in the narrow hallway.
Its golden pendulum swings hypnotically as the calming chimes sing softly,
The soothing soundtrack to two generations of children and
The persistent, soft symphony to my thoughts and reflections.*

*As dusk turns to dark, my thoughts drift to the frosty nights of my boyhood.
I recall my grandparents' home, where generations gathered respectfully each Sunday.
The cramped kitchen burst with love, banter, eating, and entertaining.
Above the frosted windows, a cuckoo clock's call joined the beautiful melody,
Its tiny yellow occupant peeked in rhythm to the swing of opening and closing doors,
Watching our roles change from children to adolescents to adults.
The carefree days of youth flew by so swiftly, leaving us to be the caretakers of
The timeless lessons of respect, tradition, and family carefully instilled by our elders.*

*Through the clouds of reflection my childhood home appears on its suburban corner lot
Framed by the narrow streets that once served as our giant playground.
For over five decades this cherished home has stood as the deep-rooted anchor of our family.
The unassuming living room clock still ticks gently in cadence with the soft chimes
That once serenaded four little boys as they rapidly sprouted into men.
Embarking on their committed pursuit of their own hopes and dreams,
Affectionately armed with the everlasting lessons of love and compassion
Taught and modeled by two revered parents who lived the words they spoke.*

*As the grandfather clock strikes the hour, I am abruptly awakened from my memories,
Thankful for the peace and security acquired through respect, tradition, and family and
Challenged with the uncertainty of the fast moving journey that lies ahead.
With its final stroke, the clock returns to its slow, soothing rhythmic swing,
Revealing that the transition of time is not to be feared, but embraced...
The powerful values of the past are not a fading vision
But an invitation to create and live a new time
Filled with love, understanding, togetherness, and compassion.*

Frank Allocco, Christmas 2016