

The Middle Years

WALT MCDONALD

Planning a family, we thought heaven would be
four collie pups, two acres without a fence
or leash laws, a riding mower and perfect

golf-course lawns, no need for pooper scoopers
or tick dip. Neighbors would never complain
about barking dogs or gardens dug up for bones,

no glass breakage to raise insurance rates.

When our first born turned thirteen,
we owned them all, four wobbly collies

my wife and I had to decide what to feed,
how to keep them warm on winter nights,
when to put each one to sleep.