The Elephant Graveyard

In school today we learnt about Christopher Columbus,
And that he sailed across the whole ocean from Spain to America.
I asked Mommy what it was like.
She said that it was hard.

She said the sailors got sick and saw mermaids,
And that sails ripped and the boats got holes in them.
But Mommy told me they had extra sails
And duct tape for when times were tough.

When Grandma started coughing up blood I figured times were tough.
So at the next visit I brought her a roll of duct tape.
Then Mommy told me
That duct tape doesn't fix everything.

The next day we learned about animals in India.
My favorite animal is the elephant!
I asked Mommy if Grandma was in danger like the elephants.
She told me that Grandma didn't have much time left.

I asked her where she would go when her time is up.
Mommy told me that the older elephants know
To go to the elephant graveyard when they're ready,
And just like them Grandma would know too.

When I went to bed that night Mommy said this:

Once we are in this graveyard we decide to light a fire, to illuminate the mysteries of our pasts. We start with a spark. A simple truth. We add beliefs as kindling that cause the fire to creep outwards. As the fire grows it lights up the darkness just enough to recognize that there is only darkness beyond. Only when the fire is raging can we see all that is around us. And only when it begins to die do we turn to ourselves in reflection. Solitude creates a stillness of time in the elephant graveyard. And flickering shadows tell stories of the skeletons beneath.

They tell stories of the skeletons beneath.

We tell stories of the skeletons beneath.