

HOW TO WRITE A VILLANELLE

by Bruce Bennett

You find a line that sounds good. It might do.
But one is not enough. You have to try
to come up with another. It takes two

That bear repeating, that can get you through,
that let you know the thing is going to fly.
First find one line that sounds good, that will do,

Then pair it with a partner. Just a few
rhymes are required. Stringent rules apply,
but you're on top of things once you have two

Lines that go well together, though it's true
you need to find one more to satisfy
the form's demands: a *b* rhyme. When you do

(remembering that all *b* rhymes are new,
and that the whole must flow as well as tie
neatly together, weaving in the two

Lines that repeat, yet change as you review
what's come before, what's still to come) - but why
complicate matters? All you've got to do
is find one line to start with. Make that two.