

Andrew

David,

Here's the original. It's 28 lines long.

1. ["There once was a maid Ariana
2. She kept the shrine so dear.
3. She left a legacy to her offspring:
4. Keep the shrine so every year.]
5. ["Her son Mikhail became mayor
6. With a goal to keep in fashion
7. The town's old, beloved reputation
8. As the city of love and passion!]
9. ["Mikhail's oldest child, named Magda,
10. Did build Lovers' Walk, a nice park,
11. So that all of Cove's lovers, both young and old,
12. Could court outdoors in the dark!]
13. ["Her daughter Nadia did wed one day
14. To Julius, a not-too-wealthy young lad.
15. He left her with child and went far away
16. And as for her heart, it was sad.]
17. ["Then one day from Yew the fateful news came
18. That Julius by beast was killed;
19. The child came early, 'twas a difficult birth
20. And Nadia's soul became chilled.]
21. ["With dagger in hand and child in arm
22. To the Shrine did Nadia run.
23. She raised the dagger and plunged it in,
24. And would never again see the sun.]
25. ["Nastassia grew up an orphan, you see,
26. Unloved and unwanted by all;
27. So today she walks in solitude
28. Awaiting destiny's call.]

Here's what I did with it. It's 32 lines long.

1. There once was a maid Ariana
2. Who held the shrine so dear.
3. And she asked that her children would follow
4. And keep the shrine year by year.
5. Her son Mikhail became mayor;
6. His goal to keep in fashion
7. Cove's old beloved reputation
8. As the town of Love and Passion!
9. Mikhail's eldest child was Magda.
10. She built Lovers' Walk, a fine park
11. Where lovers, both young and old
12. Could court outdoors in the dark!
13. Ah, but the clouds of misfortune do hide
14. Where the sun's brightness seemeth most fair.
15. And poor Nadia, Magda's daughter,
16. Of misfortune had more than her share!
17. A poor boy named Julius wed her
18. And left her one day, great with child.
19. Then from Yew there did come a sad letter;
20. That Julius died in the wild.
21. The clouds were gathering darkly
22. On the day that Julius was killed.
23. And the birth was hard and came early
24. And Nadia's soul became chilled.
25. Who knows where she found the sharp dagger
26. That ended a life so unkind?
27. With the last breath in her body,
28. She laid her new babe at the Shrine.
29. Nastassia grew up an orphan
30. Her past a sad lesson to all.
31. She walks ever cloaked in ~~her~~ solitude
32. Awaiting her destiny's call.

*Russell's suggested
switch for
De Maria's poem.*