

JIM
(For my Grandfather)

Your old bones never thawed out
after that job you had to take
in the freezer section
of that mystery bag meat factory.

Then

When the TO LET sign
hovered over your head
you moved to that unit
next door to the TAB
and you sat on your superfluous sofa
each day
watching your wife
blackmail the cooking
with ash-dangling
cigarette wedded
to her bottom lip.

But you never complained.

Then

When your pension cheques
became the highlight of the day
you moved to that terminal home
where the Nightingales
pinioned your dignity
to the bed-head

and alternated
your potato-chip pyjamas
(too often)

and your wife
patted your hand
on each galloping visit
and proclaimed –

“Never mind Jim,
I know exactly how y’feel. . . .”

But you never complained.

Then
When you passed away
unruffled
like a true pacifist
they moved your memory to that rosebush
facing a most respectable view
and every second Sunday
your favourite daughter
reflects off your identity
and you beam so brilliantly
and she bids farewell

But you never complain.

You just

fade a little. . . .

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HOLIDAY AT SWANSEA, TASMANIA

(For my parents)

Like conquering tug-boats
we hauled each other
over the seam-bursting dunes
and
the wind,
full of mirth
blew up our dresses
like a fast balloon
whistling
at our rainbow-coloured bloomers.