

Like a Fist

My father was a tall man
And I the child in his shadow.
There was something dark about him
Like a loaded fist.
Or teeth scattering suddenly on lino
With a mouth that tastes of blood.

One day in late December,
Without any warning,
My mother's voice,
Coming from the telephone in the public call box,
Said *Your Dad is dead.*
As I walked back past the bakers,
Suddenly,
My stomach had no bottom.
But I caught it
With the fists my father gave me.

Jim Conwell