

Peace at last.

I didn't sit with it.

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Classic hypocrite -

I pressed and rushed and carried on.

I didn't sit with it.

Because it's hard to stare
into this gaping, dad-less hole.

Yet it sat with me:
Holding, hanging, like a shadow -

Pressing on my day.
Thus catching up, at 2am
To sit and sigh and say-

Seven years going,
Seven years gone.
Half a life disturbed.

And now the scales tip
The echo of life's curve.
It's odd to see one's timeline,
Butchered up like sirloin.

On offer: available to weigh.

The latter full of growth and life,
The former full of growth and strife.
Both with adventure, journey, pace...
Grief mottled through it all.

Fourteen, seven, seven -
The Before: the during: the after.
And chapter four we open now;
The after of the after.

So I sit at butchers counter;
Night-shadow enveloping.
Heavy presence, gradual absence,
...Irrevocable vacancy.
Life pulsing on, relentless.

I no longer need a "dead dad tee",
Don't receive the head-tilt sighs,
No offers of lasagne.
Still;
I'm sorry I wasn't there.

Oh, dad. What you have missed.
It's gone so fast. What have I missed?

Author: Nicola Lillie

I'm veggie again - rabbit food you'd call it.

And I've got two kids - oh man they're loud!

But they're the boys you always wanted.

And Mark is still the best - do you remember I said yes?

I'm making, learning, teaching. They even let me on TV. TV- me!

(Remember when I spoke on radio, and you hovered in the background? Gosh, your pride
was so distracting.)

And I've also spent some time,

Figuring out your presence in my life.

As an adult looking back.

Oh dad, it would have been so good -

To know you.

So weighing up this pound of flesh,

2am now three -

We've aged,

We've worked,

We've rested.

We've been pounded by the mallet.

And I'm coming now to see:

That in the mottled grief:

is the fat,

that spits, and smokes, and burns,

- but also gives life flavour.

Author: Nicola Lillie