

Reflection

First light
Lifts the quiet curtain
And dispels the night
To gift another day

Time and space
To reflect
On other *firsts*
That have come my way...

...birthday:

A moment fixed in black and white
Lifted, squinting in soft April light
Swaddled, held in the crook of arm
Safe from danger, safe from harm.

...steps

Unsure, tottering, stuttering, and short
The slow collapse deftly caught
Enveloped gently in father's hands
Wavers, sways, and finally stands.

...word

What miracle happened that long-ago day?
When gurgle and jabber became something to say.
When one word, then two, turned into a flood
To be laughed at, agreed with, and misunderstood
An electrical impulse hid deep in the brain
Synapses jumped again and again
Welded and melded till something was heard
As that first of a billion magical words.

...cigarette(s)

Whatever possessed us, I never shall know
But we did, and we hid, and kept our heads low
As we whispered the smoke was clearly seen
And us feeling 'cool as a mountain stream'
Twenty menthols between us (now green at the gills)
Enough to convince us that smoking kills.

...drink

Along the road from boy to man
Equal shares in a Party Can
Smuggled past parental eyes
'Butter won't melt' and teenager lies
'Just cider, I swear, we'll be back by ten'
(Let's hide her, I dare you, so we did, and then
mixed it with Fanta, improved how it tasted,
and it went down a treat...
...but still we got wasted.)

...kiss

Not two years short of sweet sixteen
I fell for the charms of a dancing queen
With hair that hung below her waist
By the end of the dance, we'd exchanged toothpaste
And sworn to never see another
I believed her only
To discover
That soon she was dating
My best friend...
...The End.

...wage-packet

Brown paper packages, tied up with work
At the end of the week we'd loiter, we'd lurk
With caps in our hands till the wages came through
Then head for the shops where everyone knew
The LP they wanted, or the pair of blue jeans
Which they flaunted that evening in the place to be seen.

...impressions

My presentation, long and boring
Doodle, fidget, yawn and snoring
A point of interest caught my eye
Comely calf and flash of thigh
Figure-hugging tartan skirt
A bat of eyelids, a smile...
...a flirt?

...born

Nine months waiting, we now are three
With a name to add to the family tree
We cuddle and rock him, bill and coo
But we're green as leaves as to what to do
When the mite won't sleep, seems not be breathing
Or wakes and screams whenever we're leaving.
No chance to take a sneaky look
At the new-born baby instruction book.
But he's swaddled, held close in the crook of arm
Safe from danger, safe from harm.