

## UNDER THE ANAESTHETIC

Now he was a boy of six again.

'*Your grandma's gone to God,*' mum said.

They stared at grandma in her box,  
the first time he'd seen someone dead.

In the front parlour, she lay in state.

His mum had made him say goodbye.

He couldn't believe gran was *really* dead.

She'll soon wake up. He didn't cry.

Why was he seeing grandma, *now*?

Was he close to death, himself?

Though at fifty, he *felt* in reasonable shape,  
he was hardly a picture of health...

Perhaps he was already dead,

if death was a limbo to last?

His pieces of memory failing to fit  
the crazy jigsaw of his past?

He stared down from the ceiling  
at himself, now twelve years old,  
a sea of white coats all around,  
sun flooding the room with gold...

He wanted to stay forever, there.

No desire for any release...

But a soft voice sounded in his ear...

'*You're luckily still in one piece.*'

*'Ready, now, for a nice cup of tea?'*

The nurse was helping him sit up in bed.

How good it felt to be alive,

to face the twisting road ahead.