

Worship the wind and every molecule of oxygen we breathe

by Claire Connelly

In the hospital my grandmother wept: *“From the blood thinners, even the tiniest shard of glass would cut him terribly. So I had him drinking out of plastic on the tiles. What I wouldn't give to still be cleaning his blood off the floor...”*

He looks like he's sleeping and he
squeezes my hand, even as the neurologist tells us
death is inevitable. He looks
healthier than he has in years.

Called us all yesterday.
Chatted away.
Told Gran that he loved her
– like she hadn't heard it before,
that without her the world was stark and grey.
Ticking the little boxes
He kept his entire life:

How are you?

How's mum?

How's dad?

Well as long as you're

happy and nice.

What I wouldn't give to
sigh at that ridiculous list

just one more time.
Now we wait for him to go,
please peacefully.
We weep while twelve watch over him,
(Plus my five).

The little girl on his shoulder,
boy soldier by his side
Gerald, Sophie, Ike, and his

war mates
And Michael
Wrestling for his life.

Go now,
Gerald is waiting for you.
He's been waiting a very long time.
He's so excited to see you!
Discuss the cricket score,
those well worn tales about
the war.

He led a good 87 years.
This doesn't seem real,
Having said our goodbyes
Sitting by his bedside
Waiting for him to die...