

smoking guns

I'm thinking of home . . . of my mother and father and sister . . .
my sister doing homework at the table . . . my mother cooking in the dingy kitchen . . .
my father sitting in his armchair after work rolling his own . . .
half an ounce of Old Holborn in a silver paper packet . . .
with the timber framed houses on the label . . .
and his Rizla Red cigarette papers . . . like a doll size box of tissues . . .
he pulls out a paper . . . lays it in the hand size rolling machine . . .
opens the tobacco . . . I can smell the rich scent twelve thousand miles away . . .
loosens it . . . picks a little between his fingers . . . lays it on the Rizla . . .
licks the adhesive edge . . . turns the machine . . . takes out his roll up . . .
opens a matchbox . . . takes out a match . . . pokes the stray baccy back in the fag . . .
twists the ends a bit . . . strikes a Swan Vesta between cupped hands . . .
puts the roll up to his lips . . . breathes in deep . . . holds his breath . . .
lets out the smoke . . . a grey shadow slipping across his face . . .

my mother says It's your father's only pleasure . . . it's not too much to ask

104 in the shade on Edinburgh airfield . . . my shadow the only shade . . .
I walk into the washroom . . . take off my clothes . . . leave them on a bench . . .
stand under the shower . . . let the water run down . . . cool me . . .
turn off the tap . . . step onto duckboards . . . dry myself . . .
hands and feet in the geiger counter . . .
waiting . . . waiting . . . waiting . . . anxious for the green light . . .
back to base . . . laying on the sagging bed in the heat . . . waiting for sunset . . .
thinking of radiation . . . thinking of half lives . . . knowing bugger all . . .
armour plated insects whine in through open louvres . . .
beating their brains out on the opposite wall . . .

I wait for the weekend it's my only pleasure . . . it's not too much to ask