

## DAD

He stepped off the bus,  
held the evening paper,  
bought outside the Yard,  
like a riding crop,  
slapping his thigh.

He strode toward home,  
work-day over, building ships,  
ten hours, sometimes on his knees,  
fitting linoleum on decks of steel.  
A shipyard worker.

Serious, most of the time,  
even his play showed a hint of unease.

Never authoritative in manner,  
but a union leader,  
and president of his Blue Lodge.

In debt most of the time,  
he strove for the living  
he felt his wife and children deserved.

Thus, lived beyond the income  
he could ever earn,  
sure that Providence would see to his reward.

He worked extra jobs,  
And reveled in his prowess  
to make ends meet.....could do anything.

Many times, growing up,  
I couldn't understand him.  
God fearing, but with a bone-deep prejudice.

But then, he would listen with forbearance  
to my left dogma, as if with pride.  
He loved his family with a fierce compassion.

Would that I had known  
how to love him more.