

Rolling a Cigarette

I open the tobacco tin.

I put a tape on the music centre
And half listen to it,
The phone rings and I answer it,
Wrong number.

I take out the Rizla machine.

I boil the kettle and make a coffee,
It's raining,
I drink the coffee,
I hear footsteps outside,
A muffled person shuffles past the window.

I put a filter and tobacco in the machine.

There's a knock on the door,
I answer it,
Wrong address,
I close the door.

I close the machine and roll.

I give up my job and sign on the dole,
I go out and come back
To watch the television,
The tape still plays.

I insert a Rizla paper (green) and roll.

The Sun comes out,
I stroke the dog.

I take out the finished cigarette.

I fall in love and make love,
I laugh and I cry,
I stare at the garden
And clean my car.

I scrape up the loose tobacco and put it back in the tin.

I get married and have two point four children,
I get drunk,
I get divorced,

I'm still in love, love's grey,
Passions purple,
I put my glasses on.

I strike a match and light my cigarette.

I make a meal,
Boiled potatoes and grilled sausage,
I eat it,
I go to the toilet and wash my hands.

I smoke my cigarette.

I visit the doctors,
I've got cancer and he prescribes
Valium for the nerves,
I watch the news and it's war,
The car workers are on strike,
The Pope's died.

I put my cigarette out.

I go to bed and fall asleep,
I dream of love and my dreams are wet,
I climb a mountain,
I fall down,
The country's bankrupt,
I wake up and roll a cigarette,
It's morning,
The day goes by in a dream,
In a haze and vague,
It fades and dies,
I look in a mirror,
I pick a spot
And watch my face drain away.

Adrian Tomkinson

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