Poem

A Moment in Time – Boarding School Julian Nangle

60 years ago to the week, the day, the hour he stands beneath the apple tree his tuck box, crammed with biscuits and sweets, shining from the fresh black painted corner pieces, the lock in the catch, with its key glinting.

The smile on his sunny face so proudly gleaming he stands to attention his hair brushed neatly his uniform pressed.

In the background his father's car lies in shadow waits to take him away waving to his mother - inexplicably in tears.

On arrival the size of the building surprises him leaves him uncertain where he is going. Looking around, all at once his father gone, his tuck box too, the boy is being taken to his dormitory. Later that evening, September 7th, 1955, he lay in his bed sobbing until, from somewhere in the dark a senior boy's voice bellowed 'Put a sock in it' – and so – he did: dutifully he picked a sock from his clothes pile lying on the little chair beside him and stuffed it in his mouth.

60 years on the man yearns for innocence lost in that moment never to be retrieved.

He waits for the boy but the boy does not come fearful he'll never be believed.