

## For Absent Friends

Genesis

Sunday at six when they close both the gates  
a widowed pair,  
still sitting there,  
Wonder if they're late for church  
and it's cold, so they fasten their coats  
and cross the grass, they're always last.

Passing by the padlocked swings,  
the roundabout still turning,  
ahead they see a small girl  
on her way home with a pram.

Inside the archway,  
the priest greets them with a courteous nod.  
He's close to God.  
Looking back at days of four instead of two.  
Years seem so few (four instead of two).  
Heads bent in prayer  
for friends not there.

Leaving twopence on the plate,  
they hurry down the path and through the gate  
and wait to board the bus  
that ambles down the street.