

“Glory Days”

Dad would have went pro,  
'cept he broke his leg in the big game of '72.

He would have been great,  
let me tell you.

Now he just drinks beer and swears a lot.

His trophy still sits behind glass up at the high school,  
shiny as ever.

They even asked him to coach the midget team.

“I didn't always look like this...”Dad slurs.  
“Full head'a hair, six pack...hell, all the cheerleaders  
wanted me. I was the star player, you know...  
...And you can be damn sure my Camaro was  
the fastest on the block!”

Some nights, after all the Pabst Blue Ribbon is finished off,  
I hear Dad sob and mumble on about the “Glory Days.”

Jimi Mann

“Listening”

Listening:

It's what people do quietly  
With nodding heads and sympathetic eyes  
Except when talk gets heavy  
Then people try to escape.  
I knew where they wanted to be;  
Anywhere but next to my voice  
Where the conversation packs on the pounds  
And I don't sound familiar anymore  
But rather like a cliché of teenage life.  
I despise all those who made it so-  
    This reason why we weigh conversations.

You wouldn't try to escape  
You always made the weight seem lighter  
Or at least more manageable  
Revealing to me through your eyes.  
But like a pen you ran out of ink,  
Losing patience and paper for notes  
Nothing ever changed, so everything died.  
I wish I could have conserved your ink.  
Now I can't even find a pen.

Faking:

It's what humans do incessantly  
With nodding heads and sympathetic eyes  
Except when talk is light enough for listening.