

I couldn't say

i couldn't say back then
why being caught in his scarf
felt like love but it was love
or as much of it as he would risk
smelling of soap and offices
tin baths and back to backs
it was our only game
he never liked football
or talking much to us at least
so running through the kitchen
afraid and hoping to be lassoed
and gathered up like lovers
we let our bodies go limp
for a moment of feeling
of being his children

and now i can't say
having watched him die
baffled and battered
by the fall and the hospital
terrified rotting
with cancer and emptiness
if it was only the smell of work
and commuter trains
bay rum and brillcreem
or if there really was something
buried behind his silence
or where his scarf is now
so i let my body go limp again
hoping to be gathered up
by words he never said
and a moment of his love