

William Thorpe

What an ordinary man he looked,
Sat in his ordinary chair,
With his ordinary, greyish, brownish, shortish hair.

There was a hopeless look in his eyes themselves
But in his brow was, standing firm, a steely glare,
That belonged to a chap who could earnestly stare-
Down God himself and tell him what was what and what went where.

He knitted a nice little hair-tidy:
Innocent, insignificant enough
An ordinary boy such as me would say.

He could knit like one can twiddle one's thumbs
But, in his mind, he sat on a thought, like a hen an egg,
For he knew what was coming, later that day.

In a partition of a draw labelled "inconvenient jobs," on a mahogany shelf built for snobs,
Under a desk, in an office, in an office block, in a Yorkshire court on a boring street,
Sits a warrant allowing this man to die.

And a plague of progress-addicted politicians is swarming each to be the first to explain,
In as patronisingly clear a way as is their way,
That's it's for the best, in some strange sense,
That this oh-so-ordinary yet oh-so-extraordinary man is to die today.

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Sat in his ordinary chair,
With his ordinary, greyish, brownish, shortish hair.

Theo Ayres,
April 2012