

A Working Man

A working man, my father, a man's man
who had an eye for skirts and a way with women.
At the plant, one of the guys, a union man,
shop steward before, in his fifties, he quit
in disgust at all the corruption but went back
a couple of years later after both his marriage
and effort at self employment fell apart.

Then he moved in with his new wife-to-be,
and went back to work at the factory
this time as part of management with his
sixteen years seniority in the contract.
In retirement, after the death of his second
and marriage to his third and last wife,
until his own death in his mid-eighties
he lived the middle class life he had,
as he said, worked his ass off for
since the Great Depression and FDR:
Social Security and a good pension,
reliable cars and plenty of food on the table,
a lakeside home in a rural community
where he could go fishing whenever he wanted
to get up out of the Laz-E=Boy
in front of the TV where he spent most of his time
not watching the screen but with eyes turned inward
to past events, places, people and all that.
In 1968 for the first time in his life
he voted against the Democratic Party ticket.
One of the last times we were together
he asked, *Why is everything so sad?*