

# BlazeVOX 11

Spring 2011

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## Stations of Jim

1.

Six months

his sentence  
two words

2.

She pushed back

the printouts and pamphlets  
every scrap of medical propaganda  
exquisitely glossy  
into Jim's shaky hand  
trying to keep  
hers still

3.

The day they removed  
the training wheels  
after what felt like months  
Bobby fell  
a slow wobble  
oversteered

before he'd even  
had a chance to cry  
Dad tripped too  
falling  
both skinning their knees  
laughing  
Jim the loudest

4.

At Easter last year  
Jim met her at the door  
taking the heavy dish  
tented in foil

later Grandma  
burned the ham  
to a crisp  
and Bobby wondered  
why they ate  
spaghetti instead  
while he counted  
the coloured eggs  
he'd found  
hidden all over the house

5.

They did get a second opinion  
maybe  
eight months

6.

At night she would  
turn back the sheets  
open the window  
(even this late in autumn)  
bring clean moist washcloths  
for his forehead

7.

They first realized something was wrong  
in the garden  
one morning  
while picking  
gooseberries for jam  
he'd just tipped over  
like a drunk  
or a sleeping cow  
they had joked

a little light-headed  
but heavily pig-headed  
he'd shrugged it off  
to only having  
the omelet but no bacon  
for breakfast

8.

When the Cohens

moved in next door  
Bobby had been taken  
with the two little girls

Jim invited them  
and their parents  
to dinner one night

after the homemade doughnuts  
Mrs Cohen had brought  
the children disappeared  
into the basement  
gleeful laughter  
ringing  
up into the dining room  
where Jim had  
one last treat

9.

His head on the counter

gashed and bleeding  
unable to get up...  
she'd called the  
ambulance before  
he'd had a chance to say...

10.

They'd left Bobby at home with Grandma

knowing he'd be scared  
of the hospital  
of seeing his dad  
in an ugly white gown  
that barely closed  
at the back

11.

She had managed to appear strong  
right until the tape  
and tubes  
and electrodes  
lashed to his chest  
somehow erased  
the "Jim" in him  
leaving just a  
patient

12.

He had suffered  
no matter what  
the white coats  
and expressionless gazes  
told her

the last drawn out  
note from the monitor  
sounded both knell  
and closure

13.

She sat on the bed  
a knot of sheet  
damp against her cheek  
wondering if  
her decision to  
isolate her son  
from this  
- from death -  
had been the right one

tomorrow the bedding  
would be clean  
and crisp  
waiting for another

14.

Bobby stood by the casket  
near the picture  
of his father  
Jim looking the same  
maybe thinner  
holding him under the arms  
as a toddler  
mom beaming beside them  
a winter scene behind  
with a horse  
and pine trees covered  
in snow

he didn't weep  
he just stared  
holding a tigerlily  
cut from the garden  
not sure where to place it

She knelt by her son  
nearly composed  
imploing him to ask her  
*anything*  
in a whisper he asked her if the Easter Bunny was real