

To which the oak had to give away

Merit Lachmann

Grandmother stares at the newspaper
barely recognising the place she once called home:
the woods
they have lost the fight
on the battlefield
it now stands inevitable
the grey lifeless desolate lump of concrete.

Carved in her weathered face
the wistful wrinkles tell stories of
the last fading marks of her favourite oak
in the middle of nowhere
the place where she has spent hazy nights
with heavy stomachs full of worries about the future and
the place where she has had her first kiss and
when she divorced
the place she came back to
to once more inhale the sweet touching scent of earthy carefree childhood
it has been more than just an oak tree.

And when she found out
about the cold heartless colossus built on her ingrained roots
to which the oak had to give way
she felt ashamed
and with every earth-shaking tear she cried
she washed out her from hot summer days thickened wrinkles
and swallowed memories bitterly like grey plastered bricks.

Grandmother puts down the newspaper.
she asks me
why don't we feel guilty?