

## The Marlboro Man

(For John)

His breath abandons him  
after three steps climbed  
after ten walked straight  
after rising from a chair

He has emphysema  
Fifty years of smoking  
Five foot ten  
One hundred and thirty six pounds  
Not good  
for a once pretty well built guy  
He says he's lucky  
He doesn't have lung cancer  
But how long can you go on breathing  
when you can't breath  
It's a shame  
Not just because he's my brother  
and I love him  
But he's an intelligent  
caring man  
with a son  
two daughters  
and two grandsons  
and his final non-breathing  
is going to rob them  
of so much more  
than the sum  
of his bad decisions