

# About My Dad

*by* Jerry Ratch

My dad drove a Model A Roadster  
and had a photo taken of him on a hunting trip up in Wisconsin  
with one leather boot up on the running board  
and a .22 caliber pistol in his hand  
like Ernest Hemingway and Clark Gable rolled into one  
My dad rode an Indian motorcycle  
in a motorcycle gang up to Wisconsin  
and got hit by a car making a left turn  
that broadsided him  
and got his leg crushed so bad  
they almost cut it off  
My dad got in a head-on collision  
and had his lungs crushed by the steering wheel  
My dad flew a P-51 Mustang Fighter plane  
My dad flew an Aero coupe  
and crash-landed in a wind downdraft into a farmer's  
potato patch in his front yard up in Wisconsin  
wrapped around a telephone pole  
and walked away without a scratch  
My dad romanced my mom when she was a teenager  
and drove her all around Chicago in a sidecar on his motorcycle  
They wrote "I love you" in the steam of his parent's parlor window  
while their parents were playing pinochle  
My dad drove a ski boat  
and towed me around behind the boat water-skiing  
summer after summer  
My dad played a lot of golf  
right up till the end of his life  
and suffered a stroke on the golf course  
that led to his demise  
My dad smoked cigarettes  
standing around in garages most of his life

My dad breathed the exhaust of cars most of his life  
My dad was in a barber training school  
where they cut off the tip of a bum's ear  
and taped it back on with scotch tape  
and sent the bum packing  
bleeding like a stuck pig  
How does a stuck pig bleed exactly?  
My dad loved my older brother  
who pooped right in his hand  
when my brother was new-born  
My dad died  
before my brother was murdered  
Good thing  
because that would have killed him outright  
My pants are moth-eaten  
My wallet's in flames  
My dad drove Buicks and Oldsmobiles  
and Cadillacs  
My dad drank one beer a day  
because his dad drank buckets every day  
during Prohibition  
and drank himself to death  
My dad was a complete mystery  
to me  
A complete mystery

