

I Can Sing Like That

by Michael McManus

Here lately Daddy's been talking bout' filling momma full of holes. Not like he would do it cause' he likes talkin' just to hear the words come out even if they don't mean anything to anyone but him. But just to be on the safe side I went and hid them shells cause' he's got the double barrel breached open and he's carrying it around in the yard and muttering to himself. He gets to drink as he pleases a few days now that his check came in the mail. And so I got to let him run his course with his whiskey-filled Mason jar cause' he won't run long before he's gotta' stop and rest.

Seems like he's been resting a long time ever since the 'Japs' got his job' and the diabetes got his leg. Well I seen them bad veins in his leg the way it swells up and such but I ain't never seen any Japs when he worked as a post hole digger for Milford's Landscape Service. They did all the work out at the Mall and daddy used to brag about the holes he dug for them fence posts out back behind Sears in the garden section. Cept' we ain't been to the Mall in all get out and it don't look too good for us goin' back soon with this economic crisis and all them people losin' their jobs. But daddy don't seem to mind much cause' he says its bout' time for the fat cats to start living in the alley too.

He don't seem too hard on for ever goin' back to work himself and he seems to only worry bout' the strangest things like come February when all the local TV stations got to start going digital and daddy keeps talkin' bout' how much it's gonna' cost to replace them rabbit ears on top the TV so he won't miss *Deal Or No Deal*. And now we got that new President and daddy says his own dad would roll in his grave if he saw who got elected cept' we don't know where he's buried cause' he never came home from Viet Nam and every once in a dark moon daddy will say he's still alive and livin' in a bamboo cage and eatin' Nutria Rats and stayin' as skinny as a shovel handle.

Just the other day I took daddy my report card that showed I was well above passin' in everything and he said my brain ain't runnin' off my momma's blood I'm so smart and momma won't say nuthin' but 'I can sing like that' cause she bought every CD that Christy Lane ever made and all the time cept' when she gots to cook or clean she sits in her rocker on the porch with her little player at her feet and listens to the Gospel music.

I got this secret now too cause' I been savin' the money daddy don't take from my Burger King paychecks and so I bought me a Zune from Wal-Mart and I been listening on it to *Radiohead* and *Queens of The Stone Age* and *The White Stripes*. I been thinking bout' buyin' a guitar and seein' what happens cause' I ain't no where near as country as daddy thinks. And even if he thinks too much which is bout' as likely as Jesus replacin' his bad legs I can always tell him where I threw his buckshot shells in the bayou and maybe he'll get a wild whiskey hair and dive in and swim down ten feet and tangle himself in the roots and realize it ain't whiskey he's swallowin' and that he shoulda' been lots nicer to me and momma' while he had the chance.

