

Peanut Butter

It's unproductive, that's what it is, reflecting on how we betray the dead, how they must have longed for us to drop by, maybe bring some peanut butter. My friend loved peanut butter. I know for a certainty he spent his last twenty years eating it, for I often saw the phenomenon — not very pretty. Sometimes I'd buy a jar of it, never grudging the expense, take it by for him. He rarely ate it in front of me, but as I say, the sight was most memorable. I like to think he most likely ate it as a schoolboy as well, long before I came along in his life. In fact, it's a relief to remind myself I was not a central or very important figure in his life and thus deserve little credit or blame. I would not even appear in the book if someone should write his biography, though that's not likely. The index might include peanut butter, but not me. Maybe that icky stuff is what killed him. He had only three years to go to make it to a hundred. Maybe without peanut butter he would have. But does that make me a killer for bringing it by? Such thoughts are, as I say, unproductive. Besides, I did not take him that much peanut butter. He'd most likely be dead by now anyway, at a hundred and ten. Another comforting thought is that the old saying, "There'll never be another you" is pure bullshit. By now he's turned up in some maternity ward, gone on to grade

school, middle high, and is well on his way
to his second centennial. I'm sure of it.
He was one unstoppable old sonofabitch.
He's farting around right now in a schoolyard,
God knows where, or what language he speaks,
and whether his parents can afford peanut butter.