

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Scars

by Steve Brown

How Life whittles us with its own choice designs:
my father, with thumb and finger lost,
(both to industrial machines: the thumb, to mining;
the fin
ger lost to grinding parts for hoovers);
the record of past surgical interventions
over cancer; my mum, her hysterectomy, her small-scabbed
knees from a rickety London street-life; and friends –
mastectomies, by-passes, the listed records
of assaults and accidents. It's rare that Fate
will fail to use us as its palimpsest.

All's written on the body – though we might want
to keep the page virgin-blank, blood has its way
to bubble past its skin; scar-tissue increasingly
becomes our surface to the world; we come with gifts,
and Life kicks the boxes through; tissue hardens
into the arbitrary map of blanked-out feelings –
it's who we are, more 'ourselves' than fingerprints.
We are the moving record of our weather.