The Mad Song

by Fran Duffield

Men are interesting
in books,
they drive the keening
weedy Ophelias
to unlikely drowning,
the plain grey Jane
to perish on the windtorn heather,
always they have
a good excuse ready,
the mad wife, the wicked uncle

in real life
they also have excuses
but much less
interesting:
selfishness, cowardice,
sadly also
the crazy women
who were in thrall
don't feature
in any drama
except their own
hidden in their own
dark houses