

## The Liar's Bench

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On a corner of the cliff path, just five minutes from the town,  
Stood a weathered wooden shelter, where the old men settled down,  
They watched the harbour traffic as it shuttled to and fro -  
And they told their time-worn stories to the folk that come and go.

We five lads all ran together: John, Joe, Specky, Tom and me,  
And on Sunday afternoons we would gather after tea.  
Sometimes we'd play at footy, or go nesting on the cliff,  
Or we'd listen to those old men's tales, wide-eyed with disbelief.

So quickly did our childhood pass, but none could settle down,  
And one by one they left to find adventures of their own.  
Big John he joined the army, Tom and Specky went to sea,  
And Joe got his diploma in archaeology.

So I was left alone to drift, odd-jobbing round the place,  
Thinking of those old men's tales - and with a dream to chase -  
I berthed upon a steamer, sailing eastward to the sun,  
And I vowed to make my fortune, with no inkling how that's done.

Some forty years have passed since then as each of us was drawn -  
By that invisible and life-worn thread that binds us to our home.  
And weary of our travels we returned to settle down.  
Except for Joe, who died somehow, in Port St Julian.

Now we gather in that shelter, John, Specky, Tom and me.  
That weathered wooden shelter, that overlooks the sea,  
And when we've done the weather and the Saturday football  
We outdo one another with the exploits we recall.

We tip our hats to folks who pass and wish 'em a good day  
Though few find time to take a breath or have a word to say.  
But the young 'uns sometime stop a-while when passing up the cliff,  
And they listen to **our** old men's tales, wide-eyed with disbelief.