

THE OLD MAN IN THE DITCH

By Patricia Simpson

I seen him in the distance, three cars in front,
he was lying in the ditch, a white and golden lump.
Set against the green and brown, he could surely not be missed,
by the three cars ahead of me, on the "help the injured" list.
Indeed, he was! They passed on by and left him lying there,
they obviously had more important things to do than stop and give a care!

The woman with the long black hair pretended not to see,
the young buck in the flashy car revved on past to flee.
The next in line, an older chap, surely, he'd show some compassion,
Alas! No use, he too had realised that it was out of fashion.

It came to me; I stopped to see; The old man in the ditch,
my hazards flashing and anger raging at my solitary pitch.
Big and old, slow, and down, he heaved and puffed-no moans,
I checked and talked, cajoled, and looked for any broken bones.
None to see, no blood, no bile, still breathing, be it heavy,
I got him up and off the road all the way, slow and steady.

A woman charged from a country lane, screeching, "Is he hit??"
"I'm not too sure" I shouted back. I just took him from the ditch.
He looks okay, he's still alive, but wouldn't have been for long,
with the *caring commuters* and racer boys driving hammer and tongs!

He was her Aunties old retriever, tatty, tired, and loved,
she took him by the collar and thanked me very much.
I went down the road, got in my car and carried on my way,
and you know those cars that passed on by haunted me all day.
How could they not stop? Why did they not care? Were they afraid of being blamed?
all these questions bothered me. Human nature be ashamed!

I wonder if the golden fur had been thinning silver hair,
and the victim had two legs instead of four, would there really be more care?
To the Lady and the gentlemen who passed on my so quick,
may your conscience guide you better next time you see an old man in the ditch.

