

## The way of things

by Tom Gordon

How clear the river runs! The noonday sun scatters random jewels on the water's surface, some flashing rainbow colours, some crystal clear. But all transient. It's the way of things.

I should tell him what it's like. But, then, he knows without me saying. This is his favourite fishing spot, after all – just past the wood, beside the fallen tree, on the bend of the river.

A companionable silence will do. He should be used to that. He sees what he sees and knows what he knows, ever the strong, silent type. No words of mine will change that.

He's sitting on the grass, beside me. He likes it here. It's the way of things.

We've been watching the dancing waters for more than an hour now. I have to say something.

“Well, big man. It's time.” It's all I can think of saying.

I pick up my bag and loosen the draw-string. The top of the container inside is easy to unscrew and comes off quickly in my hand. And then, it's done. Sandy, my big man, reduced to an urn of ashes, scattered in the river as I'd promised.

He spreads over the surface and the sparkling jewels have gone. But not for long. He goes quickly, and they return. Then they go quickly, but my big man stays with me, just past the wood, beside the fallen tree, on the bend of the river – and everywhere else.

It's the way of things.