

RYAN QUINN FLANAGAN

JWs

They pull up to the curb in a old brown beater.

Two men get out of the front

two women

out of the back.

They huddle briefly in the middle of the road

to talk strategy.

The men take the right side of the street

while the women work the left.

There are pamphlets in their hands.

One of the men carries a black briefcase

full of bibles.

They approach me in the driveway

just back from shopping:

Are you looking for something in your life?

the one asks.

I am looking for a misplaced carton of milk

in the trunk

but he does not need to know this,

so shake my head no

and wave them off.

Both men turn and shuffle back

down the driveway.

Each movement is short, jerky, laboured.

Like that of a broken accordion.

They are older than their car

by more than half a century,

all in their last winter,

the women too.

Having no luck
they pile back into
the old brown beater
and drive away.

A large bumper sticker
on the back
reads:
HAVE YOU THANKED JESUS TODAY?

I have not,
but almost do
when I find my carton
of milk.