

Missing /'mɪsɪŋ/ *adj.*

pronounced *miss-ing*

For Dad, because they always are.

The rubber tyre strung from a low branch
swings in the breeze, and today, the lake
is a mirror. Ducks paddle by the wet edge
as a grey heron pins me with its telescopic yellow eye.
It bends long-boned legs into a low crouch and springs up,
unfurling its wings to catch the air. I trip on a banksia root
and lurch against a tree stump, ignored
by a woman on a mobile phone, her dog chasing a leaf—

I'm unseen

by weekenders as they sit on the porch
of the newest Airbnb retrofitted with '60s schtick
from a demo two streets back.

Spits of rain splatter on my sunnies,
and my right hamstring aches from yesterday's run.

You're *miss-ing*

from all of it,

like the car keys in my handbag;
a voice that's taken annual leave
from a singer's throat; the last screw
from a flatpack; half my socks; a coin
between car seats; peace—a piece—
of mind; beach sand after a king tide;
every opportunity I slept through; a tooth filling
in a Snickers bar; a beat from an ectopic heart

miss-ing

from behind the window curtains
of your house, and the lounge chair you slept in,
a book fallen from your skeletal fingers
to your lap; from
breakfast/lunch/dinner, not
in the garden/out for a stroll/at the fortune teller/
in-grown toenail extraction appointment/biannual
colon cleanse, not
a cold case just
gone.