

# My Presbyterian father

by [Duncan D. Newcomer](#) in the [May 4, 2004](#) issue

He would sit  
Sunday mornings  
in his big steeped chair  
the cross hung  
gold and unswayed overhead  
a man in a robe.  
I had seen him dress  
sitting on the side of his bed  
he wore ribbed gauzy undershirts  
and white boxer shorts  
and my father's legs  
had no hair where socks go.  
As the organist played a meditation  
he would span his forehead with his hand  
and seem to suffer  
but then leaning back  
his bright eyes would go  
fishing for me in the dark congregation  
and I waited

and waited until  
he caught me and smiled.  
During most of the service  
I stared at unmoving  
biblical men in stained glass.  
I loved to have him  
see me in church  
and after the sermon  
I stood in line  
and went through  
shaking his hand

like we didn't know  
each other  
and I told him I enjoyed it  
and he put his other hand  
on top of mine.