

## Wales

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Sometimes I imagine that my dad was not killed by his cancer. I imagine that he recovered just before it was terminal, and, brought to some revelation by near-death, shed his old life like a skin. I like to think that he moved to the Welsh coast, to Rhyl, or Barmouth, or Llandudno, where arcades frame the beach, and that he sleeps in late. I see him in the kitchen, making a breakfast of bacon, cheese, chopped tomato and oatcakes, and eating in the breezy Welsh sun. Later, he walks along to the steps that dip into the beach, carrying a camping chair, an easel, paper and pens, and sets up for the afternoon to draw caricatures. I like to think that he charges twelve pound per person and teases the kids. When the sun is too low to see by, he packs up and walks home to the sound of the incoming sea, and spends his money at the cinema, or the seasonal nightclubs, drinking and sitting and buying drinks for women. I see him on rare, sleepier nights, cooling his tan by the sea wall, and drinking cider, and allowing himself to feel the distance of his sons.