

Title is ironic - family really left home in 1951 - also communicates how Skrzynecki has adapted to Australian culture + society - extending what is in 'Feliks Skrzynecki'!

Leaving home

My first country appointment
Was the last thing we expected -
Three of us, caught unaware
By ignorance and faith:
Our dull-witted, frog-mouthed obedience
To the letter of the law.

taught to follow the law + rules - tied to his having to move.

he used to watch adults, now he is one himself.

finding way

Counting door handles, ringing telephones
And office boys with denture smiles,
I waited three hours
For a two-minute interview;
Watching myself outside in the rain,
My severed head under one arm,
Body upright - best white shirt and tie -
A black suit to outdo
The Pallbearer of the Year!
A red-and-white sign at my feet:
"Cabbages for Sale."
The fiddler from Chagall's village
Was inviting me to dance.

a small journey in itself

out of body experience; surreal style is used here - more sophisticated expression now that he is an adult.

dream

metaphorical execution - giving up his identity to the institution

imagery links to Polish flag; his heritage + Polish culture but a mere 'cabbage'!... surrealistic artist -> the violinist used to bring people together, here tries to cheer up Peter.

his own funeral.

dehumanised system extending the motif of authoritative machinery

The man behind the desk
Never once looked me in the eyes -
His face the back of my application papers.
Hawk-nosed, crew-cut, with
A Tally-Ho paper skin,
He was the millionth person
That couldn't pronounce my name.
No more, no less,
The verdict came next day by phone
"You must go."

links to Feliks Skrzynecki

cultural differences still play their part.

Boat, Train,

Car -> always cramped. simile links to Central Station + Europe experience.

must leave home; another journey commenced by machine - like the train's whistle in Immigrants.

We packed the car
Like a war-time train - clothes,
Books, records, the poems
I'd started writing;
Said goodbye so quickly
I forgot for a moment where I was going.

uprooted again.

no chance to prepare... enjambment.

dream

surrealist...

Three hundred miles
Up the New England Highway, I stopped;
Unloaded my bags for the night;
Swore that Head Office
Would not see my face again
Unless I became my own Scipio Africanus...
Dreamt of three headless crows
Flying in a room
Whose walls were silently burning.
Bald, toothless faces
Stood at a window, laughing in the rain,
Clapping to a fiddle's music -
Their naked, hairless bodies
The colour of sour milk.

decaying institution.

chance of happiness washed away by the rain

leaves a sour taste, dehumanisation.

great ancient Roman warrior who defeated Hannibal. Skrzynecki compares this to his dealing with Head Office.

skrzynecki's style changes a lot in this poem for a variety of reasons. He uses surrealism + dreams here to emphasise the sad + depressed mood. The sophistication of style communicates his personal development. Earlier poems shared it. Now Peter's perspective of adults. Now an adult, he sees himself.