

They announce a two-minute silence for the fallen in Morrisons

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Citation:

ROCHE-JACQUES, Shelley (2026). They announce a two-minute silence for the fallen in Morrisons. Ad Hoc Fiction. [Other]

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and the woman comes out from behind the deli counter and stands ceremoniously in her gilet and polyester shirt and you lower your head and try to look dignified too, though you were in a hurry actually, getting some bits for your son's pack up, and your eyes meet the heaped dish of snack eggs behind the glass of the deli and would they make a nice change or just anger and confuse him? The egg inside is smooshed with mayo, not the intact egg of the scotch egg. You picture him unpacking them in the community hall with his new-found pals and—this silence must be getting on for halfway through now and you try to concentrate and pay your respects to the fallen of this great country with the solemnity of the deli woman but your thoughts aren't that obedient and they bleed into wishing your son hadn't started shimmying lampposts to tie flags or bought paint to decorate the mini-roundabout at the end of the street, though you've never seen him this self-confident or passionate, not since he was ever such a little fella, open-faced, swinging your hand. You did find the nerve to ask him what his grandad would have made of it all and felt the wind knocked out of you—how the two of you could arrive at such opposite answers to that question. Anyway at least he's getting out of the house and you gaze at the platter of snack eggs and imagine a perfect little egg encased inside the darkness of that breaded, sausagey meat, waiting to break out into the light—and the voice on the tannoy announces the end of the silence and the deli woman glides back round behind the counter and asks what she can do for you.