

AS I GROW OLD

As I grow old
may I not shuffle
to the beat
of self-interest
and make that slow retreat
to the right.

May I be a septuagenarian espouser of noble causes,
and march with the kinds
and sing 'La Marseillaise',
brandish made-at-home placards,
proclaiming 'DOWN WIT THIS SORT OF THING'.

May I be an octogenarian obstructionist,
and build barricades
out of bottles of flat lemonade,
electric blankets and chicken wire,
to keep prejudice at bay.

May I be a nonagenarian nonconformist,
armed with a ballpoint pen
fighting bureaucratic baloney,
filling in boxes intended
for Office Use Only.

May I be a centenarian centurion
and stage sit-ins
with fellow citizens of the world.
My mobility scooter and I would move
for no-one.

And may I be scattered ashes
attaching themselves
to lashes
blinding the eyes of bigots
and fascists.