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At 80

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At 80

Abstract
It's a good day for pancakes although I have to watch the syrup. I have to watch the sugar and the salt, the caffeine and the meat.

Keywords
poetry, aging

Cover Page Footnote
"At 80" was originally published at Booth.
1. It’s a good day for pancakes although I have to watch the syrup. I have to watch the sugar and the salt, the caffeine and the meat. I have to watch the forest in my ears and the fish scales on my feet. I have to watch the hummingbirds, the roses and my faithful jacaranda. I have to pay attention to what arrives and disappears.

2. On this side of the line, everything’s worth more or less. Money’s worth more, pride less. Legs are worth more, mouths less. Grace is worth more, heaven less.
Days are worth more, nights less.
Thirst is worth more, hunger less.

3.
Some days I wonder what became
of my other heart, not this one
the pacemaker chases but the other,
the prisoner I guarded too closely.
I don’t miss it most days,
not like I miss steak and gin.
Only some days, when I remember
the sweat and the fevers instead
of the ground romancing my heels—
when I remember the wild steps
and promises then catch myself
napping, bored between meals.