

Old Man

Yesterday you climbed apple boxes to the sky,
Found fire in the sun,
Raced the wind,
Smiled the smack of summer rain,
Balanced at the wall's edge.

Lifetimes later you read obituaries
By sixty-watt lamplight,
Fret pennies over groceries,
Numb worries in the drowning clutter of TV.

Tonight, in transit, you reached backward
For old magic,
The starlight beyond time's wrinkle,
But only touch reflections
Blurred in darkened windows,
And on arthritic knees
Limp lonely
To a silent single bed.

—Jim Walker