

## ADDIE AT EIGHTY

It's hard, she said,  
always being so damn grateful  
for snow shoveling  
or getting a couch moved  
or rides downtown. Afterwards I knew  
she scolded herself for saying it.

Once she told me how some nights  
she'd think about white lightning,  
the kind the sheriff used to make  
and stash away for years to mellow.  
You knew, she said, no birds or frogs  
ever fell in it, nothin' died in it  
and it wasn't tinted with tobacco juice  
posing as bourbon.  
It was kind of a slow pure white  
that smoothed your smile, she said,  
and made you forget about stuff  
that didn't matter anyhow.  
It took some of your breath away  
but left your tongue intact  
and contented your throat and belly  
like a good honeydew melon only warm.

Maybe that's how it oughta be, she said,  
to grow old.