

BEATITUDES OF THE AGING

Blessed are those who don't deny  
I'm not a "them," I'm still an "I."  
Blessed are the ones who see  
I need a freedom to be me.  
Blessed are they who don't ignore  
That many of my age are poor.

Blessed are they who send a prayer --  
And a ride to get from here to there.  
Blessed are they who know full well  
I have a wealth of things to tell.  
Blessed are those who understand  
I still can lend a helping hand.

Blessed are those who know and say  
When I can handle a job today.  
Blessed are those who from the start  
Know that youth is a state of heart.  
Blessed are those who can attain  
The age I've reached through sun and rain.

You are as young as your faith  
As old as your doubt  
As young as your self-reliance  
As old as your fear  
As young as your hope  
As old as your despair

GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

You're never too old to become younger.  
-Mae West

As long as you are curious, you defeat age.  
-Burt Lancaster

Age is a quality of mind.  
If you have left your dreams behind,  
If hope is cold,  
If you no longer look ahead,  
If your innermost fires are dead—  
Then you are old.

But if from life you take the best,  
And if in life you keep the jest,  
If love you hold;  
No matter how the years go by,  
No matter how the birthdays fly—  
You are not old.

WHAT DO YOU SEE WHEN YOU LOOK AT ME? The following poem was written by a woman in a geriatric ward in an English hospital. It was addressed to the people who surrounded the woman in her last days.

what do you see? What do you see?  
Are you thinking when you look at me --  
A crabbed old woman, not very wise,  
Uncertain of habit with far away eyes,  
Who dribbles her food and makes no reply  
When you say in a loud voice -- "I do wish you'd try."  
Who seems not to notice the things that you do  
And forever is losing a stocking or shoe.  
Who resisting or not lets you do as you will  
With bathing and feeding, the long day to fill.  
Is that what you're thinking, is that what you see?  
Then open your eyes, you're not looking at me.  
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still  
As I move at your bidding, eat at your will.  
I'm a small child of ten with a father and mother,  
Brothers and sisters who love one another.  
A young girl of sixteen with wings on her feet  
Dreaming that soon a love she will meet.  
A bride at twenty, my heart gives a leap,  
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.  
A twenty-five now I have young of my own  
Who need me to build a secure happy home.  
A woman of thirty, my young now grown fast,  
Bound together with ties that should last.  
At forty, my young sons have grown up and gone,  
But my man's beside me to see I don't mourn.  
At fifty once more babies play around my knee.  
Again we know children, my loved one and me.  
Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead.  
I look at the future, I shudder with dread.  
For my young are all rearing young of their own.  
And I think of the years and the love that I've known.  
I'm an old woman now and nature is cruel.  
'Tis her jest to make old age look like a fool.  
The body it crumbles, grace and vigor depart.  
There is a stone where I once had a heart.  
But beside this old carcass a young girl still dwells,  
And again my bittered heart swells.

Politicians, Scientists,  
Businessmen

Bismarck, who died at 83, did his greatest work after he was 70.

Gladstone was still a potential figure in political and intellectual circles when he was 80. He took up a new language at 70.

Faragut was 60 at the beginning of the Civil War.

Lamarck at 78 completed his great zoological work, *The Natural History of the Invertebrates*.

Laplace, the astronomer, was still at work when death caught up with him at 78. He died crying, "What we know is nothing; what we do not know is immense."

Kelly continued to be cancer specialist when past 80.

Franklin did not begin his philosophical pursuits until 50. He went to France in the service of his country at 78, and wrote his autobiography at over 80.

Vanderbilt increased in the mileage of his ocean liners from 100 to more than 10,000 between his 70th year and his death at 83, and thus added over \$100 million to his fortune.