

Lessons from Life

She comes through the door alone
She's seventy, maybe more
White hair, a gently wrinkled face
That looks like it's seen good years
She walks with an arthritic limp to the hostess stand
And asks for a table for two

Who is she, this mild-faced woman
Who's aged gracefully
And made no attempt to hide it?
Who's she meeting for lunch? A son? A daughter? A friend?
What's on her mind today that'll become the topic of their conversation?
What's the view from seventy? The hopes? The fears? The aspirations?

A smiling hostess leads her to a table
She seems grateful to sit
And nods politely as the hostess recites the liturgy of specials

She sits, waiting
For friendship, for conversation, for sustenance
Waiting
Her hands folded over a menu she appears not to see
Observing
She focuses instead on the room and its occupants
On the red carnation decorating the table

Suddenly, she lights the room with her smile
She waves
Anticipation brings her alive
As she embraces her friend

The waitress approaches and asks if they've decided
But she's in no hurry
Long ago she made the choices that brought her to this place
She doesn't need to be told
To enjoy her lunch