

# Two Poems

by [Carl Nelson](#) (August 2019)



*Soir Bleu*, Edward Hopper, 1914

## Cognitive Decline

**I'm choosing to revel in it.** Perversely  
taking pleasure as it all goes to shit.  
I've always loved decline, and at times the pratfalls.  
Like Paris, always playful, always spring,  
my diminution blossoms as a ruin  
suggesting more valorous times, more full-blooded existence  
with marvels from whitened, unruly hair  
and magic from bony, arthritic hands.

My blather has never been better,

and my absurdity supreme.

My deluded, nonsensical neurons howl.

I see me perform before them all

with hooded brow and scowl. A tie, and

a crisp white shirt too, of course,

spotted with soup. With all the wisdom I've gained

and lost but still project, I'm bound to be fantastical.

Suffice to say, I may feel differently

gumming my peas and slurping my drool,

with the poop pooling in my shoes

and squishing as I walk. Nevertheless,

I remain upbeat about doing Lear.



*Portrait of an Old Man*, Egon Schiele, 1916

Knowledge Lines and Graveyard Flowers (Liver Spots)

## **Old people drift off**

like the next phrase in a poem,  
garbled and drunk with sleep.  
Their lives can barely keep their eyes open.

I saw an old woman in a rest home once,  
who fell asleep during lunch, mid-bite,  
with her fork halfway to her mouth.  
I'd thought she'd died, but...nope.

Our joints swell with rust.  
We begin to leak and drip.  
Probably the least modern thing we will become  
is inconvenient. We understand.  
We understand inconvenience.

The old begin to look  
more and more like the dead.  
And we, who haven't much time to speak of,  
aren't in any hurry to get where we're going—  
while you can't get caught up.

Irony, isn't it? But

the end is out there. We all find it.

"Goodbye," is possibly the truest word ever spoken.

No one I know has gone back on it.

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**Carl Nelson** has recently finished his book, *The Poet's (40 Pound) Weight Loss Plan*, comprised of instructional prose and poetry. Using his method he is walking forty pounds lighter with normal fasting glucose levels and not snoring at night, while currently working on a second volume of Self-Help Poetry: (*With a Catchy Title to Come*). He lives in Belpre, Ohio where he considers existence while walking his ginger dachshund, Tater Tot. Read about the author and his newest book [here](#).

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