



POEMS

Adeline Herschfield Medalia

RELATIONS

The mother of
my second husband's
third daughter's
second husband
is dying of a broken heart because—

The father of
my second husband's,
third daughter's
second husband
has left her for a younger wife.

She is 73.

I want to tell her that I understand
That First Husbands are sometimes a bad lot.

But I was 50 when *he* strayed.
And there was time to be a
third wife to a
second Husband

And contented.

RETIREMENT

Each Day
she writes her epitaph

Re-composing while decomposing

True Dilettante
Hummingbird-like
flitting from one activity to another

Theatre here
jewelry-making there
ceramics, sculpture, painting

Master, of course, of none
Feasting on
tidbits of
praise

While humming contented little tunes of
creation
and occasionally,

A poem

In a foreign town
a veritable
playpen of opportunity.

This is what
Life prepared her for.

She has arrived—
She is content—

While
It lasts

YOUR WHOLE LIFE FLASHES

In the attic
which has harbored
without protest
these boxes
these World War II trunks
these cobwebby files

Now
relocation imminent

Immersed
as the sun moves across the floor
I confront
another person—
A girl
A woman

Pictures
Clothes
(that tiny waist)
bouffant hair
(all dark)
smooth unblemished skin
innocent-eyed children
trips, picnics, gatherings
friends (what were their names?)
career
colleagues
first husband
now dead
lovers
also dead

Do you like her?

Yes —

No —

Yes

Culled down
she'll go
back in the boxes
back in one trunk you'll keep
Let someone else throw her away

Later

WHITE POWER

Sometimes it's handy
this white hair
Combined with a walking stick
it earns priority seating and

The kindness of the young man
or the young woman
who overheads my bag

Do I feel guilty?
No, it makes up for the rest of the time
when the white hair means
I'm invisible