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**Growing Old in Youngstown**

Yes, we no longer have to travel

twenty miles to buy a nail,

but please, God, don’t let me end

like this, armpit tufts

in a tank top,

shuffling along on flip-flops

through the post-apocalyptic,

mutant Wal-Mart, hag-skinny,

or waddling, flesh wobbling,

carts full of fat and sugar.

Scared straight, I buy the bran flakes

instead, fresh fruit, a lean steak

to stave off the probably

inevitable,

like the closing of the steel mills

where they once worked,

two cars and a boat in every yard,

a sky of soot, and lungs

still hacking out.

No, no twenty-mile drive

anymore, just the blue sky

again, an empty yard,

some overgrown mills,

a coffin-nail cough,

and a nail

for every coffin.