The late Philip Booth of Castine had his own way with free verse, creating his music from the repetition of words and their placement on the page. Today’s poem, about the realities of old age, provides a striking example.

Old
By Philip Booth

Old, the old know cause to be bitter: they’ve seen
their children (as if they could tell) they’ve found
insist they are growing deaf:
old friends invent new friends
to prove the old don’t matter:
they have hardened
themselves to let memory rust out;
with only themselves to hold on to, they have grown
beyond any surprise;
to get their way they have aged again
to be children:
beyond control, they have gained control
of every last life save their own.
They know it can get no better.