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## On Not Going Gently

Carol Berge

*Grand Valley State University*

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# ON NOT GOING GENTLY

Carol Berge

Now a wild gesture of shedding familiar comforts:  
lawn littered with sales, plants leaving shelves  
as if on feet of their own, like grown children,  
friends leaving with arms-ful of my last years  
because my only child, suddenly taller than I,  
has left here, moving to his own western space:  
I sell my house, leave my meadow and mountains,  
possessions chosen as willfully as companions  
culled to surround and cherish my senses nicely.

A vengeance on the dream that nothing changes!

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But each town has a house I could live well in,  
each room holds some man I could deeply love  
though only for a most brief span of earth-time  
while the fiercest love-lessons are learned.  
With each gesture my finger-rings move slightly  
and vary, changing breadth, as within trees,  
each indicating the texture of a year's time  
or mode of a half-decade of love lived through.

Till now I have had lovers, emerald and silver,  
and cities, while stars haloed rich with rage;  
for contrast, I built finely of warm old wood  
which earth-deep weather has worn to wisdom.  
Now I must leave here, move on to other cities.  
What I chant has shifted swiftly like my rings,  
passing through permutations of deep anger  
at a world never as sweet as I would will it,  
to this patina, earned through the learning  
that everything in nature changes and leaves.

My face is wearing like the wood of my walls  
while I weep uselessly, howl to change clocks:  
though the meadow weather simply shines farewell  
nothing will soothe me into the duller passions.  
I will keep furious until the day I leave here.  
I will cause the dark stars to halo my leaving.