

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Howard Richard Debs: Two Poems

Howard Richard Debs · Wednesday, August 13th, 2025

Detritus

Leaves canvases of vibrant reds orange yellows in a myriad of shapes sizes shades arrayed far and wide multitudes wind-shaken lying plaintive on the sodden ground many still clinging to the begging branches of forest upon forest of oak-chestnut higher climbing spruce-fir all along Asheville's Blue Ridge Mountains driving the parkway in thrall to the emotions of the moment the view its hues conjured here in this place and time searching for a sign of his presence his funereal ashes cast abroad here by a significant other somewhere my brother

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Opening Doors at My Age

"The other day, I went to buy a happy 70th birthday card for a friend and I couldn't find a single one that wasn't a joke."

— Martha Boudreau, chief communication officer of AARP (as quoted in *Pocket*, 03/05/25, "Can You Think Yourself Young?" *Guardian* article reprint)

I know I'm old because
some people open doors for me.
Those who still care,
see my wizened countenance,
think of their kin who bear
a decrepit visage, exciting mirror
neurons, (*old person, helpless*)
galvanizing the empathetic cortex,
door opening. With a requisite "thanks"
I head to the greeting card aisle
to search for seventeenth birthday
wishes for twin granddaughters one year
away from their fraught entry to adulthood.
I hear his blaring voice complaining
on the phone as he shoves my
shopping cart aside, "there's this old guy,
old as the hills believe me,

the SOB's blocking the card
selection with his cart"; I keep
a silent vigil fearing he'd
attack more than shopping carts—
my very existence it seems is in his way.

(Featured image from [Charles Rondeau](#))

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