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For Joel on his 60th

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For Joel on his 60th

Robert J. De Smith — January 2019

The stumbles are coming,
And the little equivocations:
“Have you fallen in the last three months?”
“Of course not,” you say, while your mind
Turns over that silly trip on the carpet,
That misstep off the ladder.
Those don’t count, do they?
Other indignities, too,
Words that hover without landing,
Deeds done and left undone,
To cite the old prayer.
There are worries that have lingered
For decades now, like that rabbit
You can’t keep out of the garden.
But joys increase, too, like a car
That speeds along the frontage road,
Overtaking the traffic snag
Of your life on the four-lane.
There’s Tricia, there are
New friends and old,
That old virtue named wit,
And even that
Who-gives-a-darn
Which turns out to be freedom.