



5-1-2019

## A Certain Age

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### Recommended Citation

Babson, Anne (2019) "A Certain Age," *Westview*: Vol. 35: Iss. 1, Article 3.  
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol35/iss1/3>

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# A Certain Age

By Anne Babson

The body churns out its red butter every  
Twenty-eight days but spends the whole cow to do it.  
The skin still glows a little, but blood vessels ruddy  
As the spaceship face fissures, approaching warp speed.

The eyes dim a little but learn to glare murky,  
Nameless, dark guilt into the hearts of young people.  
The cheeks and chin sag from too much time upright.  
The forehead plants complaints in rows to harvest soon.

The waist and thighs expand, colonizing more couch,  
So that the buttocks sit in state, a judgement seat.  
The brain calls the end from the beginning and  
Loses track of titles. Why name names? All exit!

The voice deepens into Aretha baritone.  
When it growls its music, it says weightier things.  
The feet flatten, no need to travel. Here must be  
As good a terrain as any to take a stand.

The fingers lose their fake nails that helped pointing, eye-  
Gouging, but got in the way of making gravy.  
The hands build more now as the lifelines dig deeper  
Ditches. They scrub up more messes left by others.

The veins everywhere pop out—surprise party guests—  
Make legs permanently bluestocking radical.  
The breasts sag a little, no longer inviting  
Youthful sucklers who turned out vampires after all.



The breath labors more, subtly realizing  
Oxygen has thinned at this altitude of climb.  
The bones start to turn to chalk, ready for blackboards  
To scrape out lessons on slate for the still-foolish.

The heart beats more rapidly, aware a shark lurks  
Just under one's toes as one swims to the surface.

