



## Almost Old

At fifty I was still  
barging through life.  
*I can see clearly now*  
I wrote back then.  
I had perspective  
finally  
but I didn't know the lengths  
they'd go  
    to stop me  
    to slow me down  
    to make me  
    not whole.

Preying on my fear  
that cancer might kill me  
they cut me  
deep.

Since then I've struggled  
to regain my balance,  
I've tried to find  
my authentic self.  
I often touch  
the healing stream,  
I try to speak  
the truth.

They didn't tell me  
    about vegetables,  
they didn't tell me  
    about water,  
they didn't tell me  
    about fruit and beans,  
they didn't tell me  
    about milk, meat, eggs,  
    and sugar  
(well, I knew about sugar).

They tried to sell me  
chemo  
"You've got to be kidding"  
I responded.  
*Mustard Gas?!!!*  
Not me  
thank you  
killing my husband  
was enough.

There he lay  
weak but alive  
if only I'd known then  
we might have celebrated  
our 45th together  
just yesterday.  
Instead he died  
poisoned with mustard gas  
(only then they called it  
"cytoxin").

About face  
from suburban housewife  
mother of four  
to friend, lover, free spirit,  
I fell in love  
with a Deadhead.  
Later  
they knocked me down.  
Too free  
too vocal  
too verbal  
too dangerous  
just like my old friend  
John.

Now I'm good.  
Mostly upright  
mostly vegetarian  
mostly content.

My winged love  
fled.  
Too old  
too fat  
too damaged  
he found me,  
too cantankerous  
too depressing  
too handicapped.

So now  
I stand alone,  
friends and family  
gathered round,  
to turn 65,  
almost old.

March 31 2004