

If Unlucky in Death

If unlucky in death I shall wear old
and sit out quietly on a sun deck
under glass to warm my porcelain-cold
and fragile flesh, wrapped safely to the neck,
rationed in reading, cigars, and wines
to save old eyes and lungs and skittish gut.
I shall remember you then, stirred by lines
of a pert nurse, or some book falling shut,
or the rustle of summer wind in trees,
or an echoing number on a door.
I shall squint back then as into histories
and summon us up as if from folklore.

— *Robert L. Tyler*