

**Martin Robertson**

**[Now of threescore and ten]**

Now of threescore and ten  
fewer than twelve remain.

Granted, that limit's set  
loosely—perhaps there wait  
twenty or twenty-five  
—but I'd as soon not live  
(sooner) as long as that,  
if living's the word for it.  
Contrariwise of course  
death may come sooner—soon  
perhaps, for better or worse,  
as indeed it might have done  
at any time before.

Anyhow, with threescore  
lifting over the hill,  
it's a moment to take a cool  
look in the face, or  
rather at the fact, of death.

What do I see?  
Chiefly the urgency  
of looking, rather, deep  
and long, with all the warmth  
I have—look? rather, dip  
deep in the living breath  
of this warm, beautiful  
—and cold, and horrible  
—but felt whatever way  
this endlessly absorbing love, earth.  
Observe, absorb her faces of night and day  
before the more than sleep.