

Robert K. Johnson

HIGH SCHOOL EXCITEMENT

What pumps our voices loud
when we seize a turn to talk

at our Fiftieth Reunion
is not really the invitation
to offer our memories

of teenage times to people
eager to hear what we say.

What spurs the speed of our words
is the relished chance to feel
for one more day the surge

of soaring air we rode on
back in those years when death

cast no dark shadows, and even
trivial happenings glowed
in each day's golden sunshine.

**ABOUT MY WIFE
AFTER FORTY-SEVEN YEARS OF MARRIAGE**

When you still again
can't remember
a major date

in your life,
the name of a longtime
friend or a place

where you lived
or worked,
it is as if

my cell phone rings
to tell me
that something bad--

something I will hate--
already hate--
is on its way.

A NEW OLD SAYING

A compulsion
is a dog

whose tug
outpulls the tug

on the opposite end
of the leash.