

**Kathryn Matheson, NYC**

**I Wish I Had Said It**

My great-grandmother hated  
the color yellow – wouldn't wear it,  
no matter the shade,  
and when she was dying  
she looked like a baby bird,  
a fledging, perched to fly.

So, there is that.

Leaning over her bed,  
I forget to say  
I am grateful for the lesson.  
Yellow clashes  
with our hair.

Or the time she calls  
to say she had been  
a wallflower too, and I should  
just get out there  
and dance.

Drinking scotch  
and soda at night  
can get you 101 years  
so, have a little fun  
along the way  
and with your hair done  
you can have  
as many men as you want,  
get re-married at 80, fall  
in love 17 times,

take up a new hobby  
and paint the sky, window boxes,  
parrots preening.  
Put out a dish of pecans, salty-savory  
on top of the picture albums and  
curling edges.

In the breakfast room hangs  
a clock that sings a different bird-  
song every hour.

10am on the day of her funeral,  
the Yellow Warbler chips at the room  
and then goes quiet.