

# Generations

*Kim Kile*

A dozen orange Nike boxes,  
the famous white swoosh  
splashed across the side,  
fill your closet from floor to ceiling,  
each with the same white tennis shoes,  
a deal too good to pass up, you say.  
The seeds of Alzheimer's sowed.

Golf shirts line the same wall,  
a pastel rainbow of tags  
hanging from unworn sleeves,  
saved for a someday that never comes,  
the golf courses never played again,  
as the roots of the disease take hold.

The hallucinations start  
before your words are gone,  
stinging accusations of affairs and lies,  
paranoid visions of being followed by secret agents,  
hate-filled rants you scream but don't recall,  
your love-filled marriage a distant memory  
while Alzheimer's sprouts, blocking love.

Too soon, the disease strangles your voice  
and trips you while you walk,  
until sitting and being overgrown is easier  
than fighting through the thickets.  
A non-native species,  
invading both your thoughts and actions,  
your "I love you" crowded out,  
dementia in full bloom.