

Edgar Lee Masters (1868-1950). Spoon River Anthology. 1916.

## 122. Alexander Throckmorton

*physical abilities* ←  
*metaphors*

IN youth my wings were strong and tireless,  
 But I did not know the mountains. — *the world, experience*  
 In age I knew the mountains  
 But my weary wings could not follow my vision—  
 Genius is wisdom and youth.

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### Paraphrase:

When I was young, I was physically healthy and had stamina, but I had no knowledge of the world. As I got older, I developed such wisdom but by the time I had achieved it I was no longer physically able to ~~to~~ act on ~~my~~ it. Genius is being wise while you are still young enough for it to matter.

### Summary:

Alexander Throckmorton compares himself to a bird flying into the mountains in order to make the point that youth and wisdom seldom go together: By the time we understand the world (mountains), we are no longer physically able (weary wings) to enjoy it. Rarely, some "genius" may do both.