

“Things Shouldn’t Be So Hard”

By Kay Ryan

A life should leave
deep tracks:
ruts where she
went out and back
to get the mail
or move the hose
around the yard;
where she used to
stand before the sink,
a worn out place;
beneath her hand,
the china knobs
rubbed down to
white pastilles;
the switch she
used to feel for
in the dark
almost erased.
Her things should
keep her marks.
The passage
of a life should show;
it should abrade.
And when life stops,
a certain space
— however small —
should be left scarred
by the grand and
damaging parade.
Things shouldn’t
be so hard.

Kay Ryan, “Things Shouldn’t Be So Hard.” Reprinted with permission from Grove Press in [The Best of It](#).