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## Brother's Dying

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# Brother's Dying

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*Mary Dengler*

His death wasn't the worst;  
It was his dying—  
That long journey between diagnosis  
And the body's caving  
And the mind's  
In months of radiation,  
Immolation from the outside in,  
And chemo, from the inside out—  
Shriveling wit and sinew  
Until little but a shell was left.

It was my death and death  
Of every person staring back  
Till I lament,  
Till little but a shell is left.

In its rampage, when would he decide  
To halt the torture and declare  
"Enough—I'll go."  
But when he turned to me, I could argue  
Equally both sides,  
Hold that voice and look,  
Familiar as my own,  
And trust that God,  
Who loves us more than we...ourselves,  
Would put on human flesh again and see it all  
In human terms and give us what we want.

But God will not be reasoned with—  
His agenda outsmarts ours  
And makes us suffer more or less than we deserve,  
We think.  
So we lost James:  
A polished mystery,  
Lover of order and clean surfaces,  
Green plants, deep-ocean dives,  
Now under mounds of dirt,  
And finally,  
God,  
Resurfacing in one more epic tale.