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## Oh, Brother

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# Oh, Brother

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*Mary Dengler*

We met again this summer after years  
Of busy work, each “terribly changed.”  
He was slimmer in the jaw, his face  
Chisled, his eyes softened by a year  
Of pain, his hair a thick shock of silver grey,  
His sky-blue shirt and faded jeans impeccable  
As ever on his tall, slender frame.  
I threaded sun-set diners, heading toward him for a cup of brew.  
O Dad!—It could have been. No, brother—  
Now “the father in the man.” I drew  
My breath, so close the image to the source,  
Then breathed it out to answer all  
That wit and dreamy smile. Expressions like  
“ye-hes , my dear” were Mother, as  
He scanned the harbor, sails, and pier  
In bliss, then reeled me in for one  
More round of talk. We spoke of time,  
Its cunning strokes—the ways that sent  
Us from, then back, to God—in brogue  
Of younger days. We’d grown into the people  
We’d become, mere image-bearers of  
Our dead, whose thoughts we’d battled  
Till they wore us down and tied, then set  
Us free with all their stark and simple Truth,  
To parse it how we may.