

To Watch a Daughter Die

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To watch a daughter die —
One could practice a lifetime
And never do it well.
The labored hell
That seals a pact with death
In every breath
Knows no translation out of agony
Into words.

To see potential dashed
On the callous rocks
of Chance
And watch impotently
The pain that swells into a mountain.
And I can
Touch and stroke
And hold
Til she would break,
And empty tears til muscles
Can bear sobbing heaves no more.
But . . .
I never ease the pain —
Never touch the pain
She carries like a
Deadly albatross.

To watch her
Grow down
Laboring
Backward.
Unnaturally
Relearning
Dependance
Steering daily downward
Back to the womb
Of death.

To see her face
Ultimately alone
(I cannot come, my love)
Nightmare nights
crying "Momma"
And the door is locked
And I can beat it down
Til fists run blood
But never get inside
Never reach her.
She will journey by herself
No hand to steady her, succor her.
And I run a treadmill,
Never catching up.

I am supposed to hand her graciously away —
Flesh of my flesh,
Blood of my . . .
And not cling with every fiber claw.
There is no
Tangible foe with which to
Duel away my life
For hers.
Coward Death,
Afeared of mortal might,
Knowing in fair fight
My right
Would win.

To watch a daughter die
Is the first and worst
Death I will feel.
My own will be
A shady second run.

To watch a daughter die —
Value?
None.
Maybe only
A way to practice living
Hell
On earth.