

## *A Mother's Death*

When mother was sick she sent  
Morgan and Jason and me  
Outside to roll down hills,  
Catching hay-colored grass and purple flowers in our hair,  
So that at five years cancer  
Seemed something made of sky and hot yellow splinters  
of sun.

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I picked sweet-peas for mother,  
Purple/pink flowers in a glass by her bed.  
But she didn't see — eyes closed, she sang,  
Her voice dropping like petals in the room.

It was a year before I knew she was dead,  
(Knowing was a dark sour taste on the roof of my heart.)  
I only thought she was gone  
And perhaps walking suddenly into her room one morning  
I would catch her there, smelling of sweet-peas, singing.

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I think that if I could  
I would reach both arms around the waist of the world  
and squeeze it flat as a sky,  
To make the dead sprout up.