

Not Like Everyone Else

Long ago I figured it out. That's just the way I am.
For example: I have never been able to understand
what's so great about sliced bread,
search everywhere for the other variety.
And there is no desire lurking inside me
for a large-screen TV.

Still, it seems a bit strange that now, mostly,
what I feel is this sense of peace.
Dylan Thomas would never have approved (at least,
not if we believe what he says in the villanelle).
Toward the end Dad was sleeping all the time—
even when someone shook him,
called persistently in his ear.
How much additional transition is there,
I ask myself, between one "good night"
and the next?

Let him go, gentle.

He was ten weeks shy of 94 years
and, until a month ago,
could have engaged you
in an intelligent conversation. Can't see
how we have any right to be upset.

Had either of them departed quickly,
never suffered their prolonged frailty,
a younger son might still be inclined to dwell
upon parental insufficiency. Instead,
over time, youth and age exchanged
places. (In the end, now-sightless eyes
still twinkling, Dad even introduced me
to everyone as his father.) And I forged
a bond with each that otherwise
might still be counted among the missing.

Let him go, gentle.

Perhaps, I decide, it's not so strange
that now what I feel, mostly,
is this sense of peace.

Steve Bloom
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