

Disposable People

I never knew my uncle, Richard
when he was well
nor my mother when she wasn't sick
Nor her closest friend, Cecile
when she wasn't at the point of dying
People: All versions of bodies
wasting away
Wilting from within
Impact
You reach a point
suddenly
when the package has crumpled
and the contents
have been crushed
beyond repair
Beyond rejuvenation
And you know the beloved will die
The odd thing is
they sometimes crumple slowly
Oh so slowly
that you do not even see
the wrinkles forming
and you do not know
the devastation within
Then towards the end
when the end is inevitable
the timing goes awry
They either wither
A slow-leaking soul
A container clinging to what was within
Or they show no signs of going
and then they are gone

In the first case
I anticipated a lengthy goodbye
But in the few short weeks
that he underwent treatment
he wasted away
In the second case, youth blurred
my vision of oncoming death
and I refused to see
The third occurred slowly over years, months
then in under a week
she was little, less, no more
Pain

When inside of you has been eaten away
with sorrow
When they say the person
is better off dead
and you do your best to believe it
Too late, they say
as if shelf-life applied to people
like a moldy loaf of bread
diseased to become
disposable, throw-away people

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