

Me When She's in Hospice (for KathyLee)

She can't tolerate me now
I can feel it in the 4% of her remaining.
She is too tired and
I am abandoning her with
two quick calls each week.
"Can't talk long." I say
"Got a client in a few minutes," I lie –
I never mastered how to sit in quiet presence in the distance of phone lines
Also,
she weighs on me now, like quicksand
And I feel myself drowning in
The gritty soil of grief.

Im chosing the life she cannot live.
Her vitality bleeds out and I
I am an opportunistic vampire

Having trudged through the shadow of her death
I clutch this life to my chest.
Food is sweeter.
I notice everything I touch.
I linger.
I embrace.
I feel and even this grief I love.
It means I am alive.

In her tragedy
I revel in my life
I don't want to waste a moment.

Perhaps I should not bear such bliss with this grief.
My joy in life becomes an ode to her.