

MY SISTER IS LEAVING

*My sister is leaving
In less than a month
But she wills not to know*

*The woman I see when I look at her face
Is ten and she's twelve and she's older than me
She's bossy, officious, and wants to be queen
I'm young and I'm meek and I go where she's been*

*My sister is leaving
Can't follow her now
Nor hold her here with me*

*Throughout this long battle she's waged with her life
She's shouted and fought and raged at the world
Still railing against the words that she's dealt
My sister rejects all hints of her death*

*We never were close - she queen, I a serf
But two years have passed by as I've watched her life fade
And comes now the end and I find myself lost
Don't know what to say. I despair at the cost.*

*What says the serf when the queen passes on?
Who is the queen when there is none?
Where is the fault when the queen is no more?
What does the serf with no queen to rule near?*

*My sister is leaving
And part of my being
Will leave with her parting*

*What will remain of memories from youth
And two years of tending her slow failing flesh
And watching denial wreak havoc with treatment
And calming our mother through pain of her loss*

*My sister is leaving
There's nothing to do
But play out the cards we were dealt*

*I've been at her bedside through bad and through worse
Have held her and wept her and cleaned her and cursed
She leans on me now. The roles have reversed
Can't say I'm impressed with the change*

*My sister is leaving
The hole will be bleak
My heart seeks the freedom to break*

*No matter her tempers and whims and behaviors
Her death will bring loss and upheaval and change
My parents will suffer. Her daughter will anguish.
Myself, I can't measure that shape*

*My sister is leaving
And all I can see
Bleak pathways with shadows of she*

*Wherever she goes now - green heaven, dark void
Her pain will be gone soon; removed from her flesh
We'll then all be free to stitch whole the heart rends
Of years of her fatal self-rule*

*In time there'll be peace. Or so I am told
Regardless the pain of the end
The anger will fade. Harsh words be forgotten
And what will remain will sustain*

*I'll reach out to mother, and father, and children
Bring comfort and peace and some cheer
Though sister was queen bee, I've always been coach
And I'll rise to that role. No reproach*

*And friends who dear love me and husband and child
Will quietly rise 'round and beneath me
And they will bring shoring and bracing and light
That safely sustains through the night*

*My sister is leaving
Soon she'll be gone
I think we won't crown a new queen*

Mei Tui