

## Invictus Renewed

Rudderless, I ride waves alone,  
oldest of my siblings, daughter  
charged at my mother's deathbed  
to continue family closeness...

Failure a brick around my neck,  
I drown on muted memories,  
dead hearts screaming isolation  
as icy water fills my lungs

and hopes drift to a sandy grave.  
Yet death lurked for each a lifetime  
ago, vanquished by me, although  
remembrance serves no purpose now.

I would sit down to tea with them,  
my sisters who treat me as dead,  
talk of life small and large, and learn  
the joys and sadnesses they've had.

I would sit down and share my love,  
yet what words would mend deafened ears,  
all before dead on tympanic  
walls, heart lamps unwelcomed, unlit?

I would tell them of my children,  
budding artists and writers,  
my oldest caught in a whirlpool  
of confusion, floating, adrift.

I would tell them life's tug of war  
means never slackening the tug  
to gain survival, happiness,  
that slackening's yielded only pain.

I would tell them our mom, fighter  
against darkest dawns,  
and our Amazonian female  
heritage keep me moving forward.

I would sit and break bread with them,  
conducting dialysis on all  
bad blood flowing between us,  
so years of isolation end.

I would, in parting, hold them tight,  
my love for them flowing from me,  
sealing us forever close.  
If they need me, nowhere's too far.

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My mother's favorite poem,  
Invictus, guides me through roughest  
shoals, revised as years of bricks drag  
me toward the impending cold.