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## Rosie

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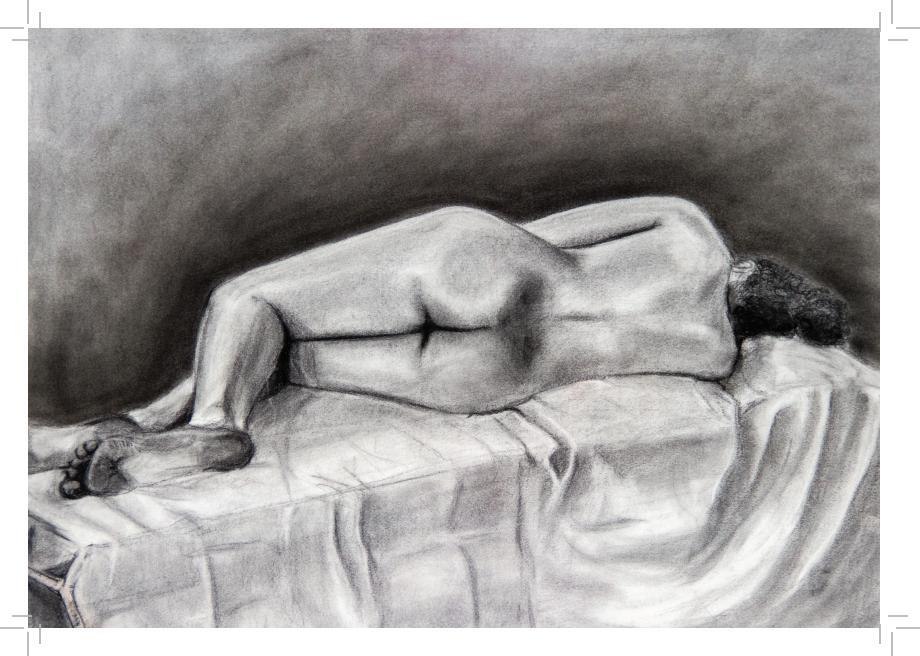


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## DEATH SLEEPS AT THE FOOT OF MY BED

**AVENLEA GAMBLE** 

Death sleeps at the foot of my bed. It is usually quiet, and doesn't take up much space. But sometimes Death is talkative, and we chat, two old friends. We discuss how our days have passed in the other's absence, As Death makes thousands more absent in those solemn moments. And sometimes I bear witness to Death's morose profession. It is not cruel, but it does not know how to comfort when I mourn.

Death complains of an aching spine when it rests in my presence, And I think of Atlas, cursed to hold up the world on his shoulders. In bitterness I ask my dear friend if it is similarly cursed to hold up the world.

For I would think that it would lighten its burden daily, By spiriting away all the bad luck children, The comatose romantics, The hopeful, hopeless, and those lost amidst. The flesh of the world is a despairing husk, and you lighten that burden, layer by layer By taking my friends and my family, those I love and those I never got to meet How can we curse you then, my friend, if you lighten your curse? Death dismisses its persecution Alas, life is more infectious than death Nearly twice as many first breaths are taken to replace the final exhalations

**ROSIE** 

JANA BURKARD