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Rosie

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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