

## **W Roger Carlisle**

### **A Family Listens To Their Mother**

We strain to hear our mother's failing voice,  
as we stand in the hall of her old house.

Every morning, talking to herself, she says--  
"get up, try harder, don't quit."

Trembling, breathless,  
our mother tries to rise on stork-thin legs,  
her face confused, wasting into shadow.

Our fierce warrior is dying,  
her voice falls down and down.

We hold her upright, wishing she could fly.

W Roger Carlisle is a 74-year-old, semi-retired physician. He currently volunteers and works in a free medical clinic for patients living in poverty. He grew up in Oklahoma and was a history major in college. He has been writing poetry for 10 years. He is currently on a journey of returning home to better understand himself through poetry. He hopes he is becoming more humble in the process.

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