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Nothing is pain like watching something age.
I remember the family dog, standing up slower
arthritis in the back legs.
It made my rib cage raw, but
my family told me it was something that just happened.
So when dad began to fall asleep before 7,
call out of work and miss dinners
I wondered how comforting it would be
if he was told it was just something that happened.

The doctor did that for me,
after we rushed dad to the hospital,
when we found him passed out in the bathroom.

I wonder how the dog did it for so long
every
single
day,
the stiffness in my legs ached where it never had.

Never more than in these years
do I want to be a time traveler,
see how my dog managed so long,
say goodbye once more,
get practice for the future.

This is not about saying goodbye,
I'm not ready yet.
There will be a day when you are too tired
to make it up the stairs,
so sleeping at the bottom will sound good enough.

I was always awake in my room
when you carried the dog up to the kitchen in the morning.
You taught me to lift idols up
so I will.