

Real Death

Mount Eerie

Death is real, someone's there and then they're not
And it's not for singing about; it's not for making into art
When real death enters the house, all poetry is dumb
When I walk into the room where you were
And look into the emptiness instead

All fails
My knees fail
My brain fails
Words fail

Crusted with tears, catatonic and raw, I go downstairs and outside and you're still getting mail
A week after you died, a package with your name on it came
And inside was a gift for our daughter you had ordered in secret, and collapsed there on the front steps I wailed:

A backpack for when she goes to school a couple years from now
You were thinking ahead to a future you must have known deep down would not include you, though you clawed at the cliff you were sliding down, being swallowed into a silence that is bottomless and real

It's dumb, and I don't want to learn anything from this
I love you