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# Final Days

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Swanson: Final Days

## Final Days

### Danielle Swanson

The stairs are the first thing When her gazelle-bounds Can no longer carry her up Hind legs crumpling behind her As though made of thin paper.

She cocks her head to the side
With a hopeful canine grin
And misses the wet glimmer
In my eyes as I help her upstairs
As though she's made of porcelain.

The losing battle for her body rages As the hurt begins to take hold Creeping from hind legs to belly She cries like a child, unable To comprehend the pain.

Pills paint her eyes with a dim glaze Her head lifts and her tail flops once As I run a hand over her silk-soft hair She strains with a hero's effort Bestows her last damp kiss.

Patient and sleepy in the backseat I glance in the rearview mirror Swipe at my sorrow with a sleeve Listen to the soft huff of her panting The last few breaths of her life away.