

**Barbara Shapiro**  
*Never and Forever*

I took this picture with my phone while I held my father's hand as he was dying. I wrote the following poem, which I read at his funeral:

And so now the impossible is possible  
And you are gone but not forgotten,  
never forgotten.

And how you fought.  
You looked the Angel of Death  
Right in the face,  
Spat in the face of the Angel  
Of Death and dared,  
Double and triple-dog dared, the Angel of Death  
To come and get you because you would not come to him.

You ignored him. You laughed and smiled and would not cry  
At least not in front of anyone,  
Not that we knew of.  
You went out to eat  
Even when you couldn't.  
You walked and rolled  
With your walker, way too fast at times  
And you loved, oh how you loved -  
You loved every single day, one at a time,  
Until there was no time.

And you fought.  
(I mention it twice because you fought  
Twice as hard)  
You did not go gently into that good night.  
You raged and raged against the dying of the light.  
But in the end, that light goes out and all we can do  
Is sit in darkness and watch as that light  
Slowly, oh so slowly, rekindles in our memory.  
Never as bright as it once was but perhaps, just perhaps  
Bright enough for us to continue, to remember,  
And to remember to laugh as we remember:  
The army stories  
The dad jokes  
The illegible handwriting that required an entire cabin at camp  
To interpret.  
To remember you, as you once were and now will always be:  
A friend,  
A husband,  
A father and a grandfather,  
Always alive and always smiling forever more.  
Amen.

