

OMENS

Steeped and schooled
in hard science,
safely garbed in white,
you come to think
you're immune
to superstition.
But when hordes of flies
gathered in our basement
and our heirloom wine glass
slipped and shattered,
my primal soul shivered.

And you, nephew—
twenty-two
and a fierce rock climber—
you were told for a year
your aching chest
was just plain
muscle strain.

The flies multiplied.
The MRI came back.
I knew before looking
that the mass—
ghostly gray
and big as a golf ball—
would shatter us
like broken glass.

—Ronald W. Pies, MD

Dr. Pies is Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry at SUNY
Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY. His email
address is: ronwpies@gmail.com.

