

My Patient Returns Home
First Place Poetry 2006

Horses? Crochet and Knitting? Angels?
She wonders what I like.
I like survival.
Connecting. Nature's work.
Sleeping more than six hours in a row.
Recognizing moods as transient.
Not persistent beeping – of the monitor, the pager.

But yes
persistent beating, of heart.

I like that she is back in the exam room,
walking this time to the door without collapsing.

Daily I went in, called other strangers who were
Making decisions about how to
Reel her back in off of the precarious edge, for another day,
Watching so many complications thrown her way.
I need a calendar for
Keeping track.
I can't imagine how all that happened in three weeks.
More than body seems to have changed too.

She was always cheerful.
On the in breath:
So sorry that I caused a commotion in your office.
On the out breath:
I would like to be home for Thanksgiving.
Oh, but I am willing to give thanks here.

She has now eight meds, we recite them together,
And make a plan to wean her off them.
Her body is improving all the time,
Except that the incision that connected her leg and heart and the blood of strangers
Is not sealed up – she is open to the world and
Pleased at the shift.

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