

Just Cancer

Brian Eckert

Naropa University

It's just cancer

— but it's never *just* cancer

it's the cancer

and

waiting for weeks

and

calling new doctors

and

calling them five times in three days

and

they still can't schedule me

and

I still don't know if I have cancer or not

and

I have to drive to Aurora

and

find and pay for and remember parking information

and

I fucking hate the city

Confluence

and

(all cities, really)

and

giant-mega-complex hospital campuses

and

then, after my appointment, I have to teach a 30 minute lesson

and

it has to be part of a larger two and a half hour lesson plan

and

my campus employment status next semester is riding on this grade

and

on Friday, the next day, I have to get a new doctor to refill my *Stratera*

and

I have to be assertive because I *need* it

and

I have to grovel to avoid “Drug Seeking Behavior”

and

I just know what the fuck I need

and

I still don’t know if I have cancer

and

I guess that means I don’t need it

At this rate

I will have spent

more of my life dying

than the time I spent living

between depression and suicide
and the chemotherapy and cancer
I'll spend more time in decline
than living level with death
while these nurses and doctors
ask to pray with me,
for me—
I rot in these rusted cot beds
getting pumped full of saline
and more and more poison.

Concrete pots full of trees
Plastic shovels cutting wood
Flower stem spear of acid
Marking birch bark glyphs
Love forking water bricks path
Full lamplight fencing minds poison
Excavate sewage wells of science
Pure unadulterated theatre buffet
Frozen stone sundial pendulum
Maple ribbons drip splatters grease
Blue pine lamps drifting shift bike
Stamp braiding babble
Aluminum ornaments shrubbery
Gnarled krummholz knobs
Scent stops
Light binds

Confluence

Cold vacates

Sharp dressed veins

Spurt pains growth abundant

Shots backfiring shattering vision

Visual decay ascends

Threshold heats exhaust

Crumbling infractions

Release beginning

Anew

Yerba mate

Big tea

Tortilla chips

Hot chips

Other chips

La croix

Special K

Belvita

Granola bars

Nature valley

Applesauce

Rice

Bay leaves

Garlic powder

Chocolate Chips

Pancake mix
One chicken
Four yogurt
Half gallon milk
Juices
Kleenex
Baby powder
Lotion

Confluence