
POETRY | SPRING 2020

Family Meeting: Medical Student Meets Patient's Daughter

By Katrina Kostro

You know the worst part? Did she tell you? Well –
she used to be an opera star –
soprano – rang her highest notes like bells.
One night she whispered, *Fill my throat with tar.*

She cannot speak, but low-toned barks escape
from parted lips, saliva droplets spray.
She bites damp rolled-up washcloth, frayed edge drapes
her wrinkled chin, clenched jaw, gaunt cheeks, drooped eyes.

If I can't sing, sign me a D-N-R.
Would rather suffocate than stare in silence.
Don't cry for me, my little Luna Bar,
just make a bed, cool earth, to go and lie in.

At intermission, I'll collect my things.
My grand finale's waiting in the wings.

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Note:

DNR, Do Not Resuscitate

Katrina Kostro, MD, graduated from Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians & Surgeons in Spring 2020, and was selected into the Gold Humanism Honor Society. She will begin psychiatry residency training at NYU/Bellevue. She received her BA in art history from Barnard College. Before medical school, she became a certified yoga instructor, and has taught multiple yoga/meditation workshops for students, physicians, patients, and caregivers. Her poems have appeared in *BigCityLit*, *Mezzo Cammin*, *Reflexions: The Literary & Fine Arts Journal of CUIMC*, and she was an award-winner in NEOMED's 35th William Carlos Williams Poetry Competition. Katrina strives to combine yoga, meditation, poetry, and art, into her practice of clinical healing.

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