
POETRY | FALL 2023

Minds Go Where Bodies Can't

By Lynne Byler

Blue-gloved and yellow-gowned as the nurse
instructed, my sons open the Scrabble game and
set it up in the corner room, where the
Charles River glints up from twenty floors below.
When they take out the tiles, stands, and board I see
the pine needles in the bottom of the wine-red box.

Pressed, they lift with my finger, crumbling and green.
Needles unsure of how they got to this place,
drifting from the pine tree over the lake into
the box left to sit on the picnic table while everyone,
winner and losers, went for a swim.

Lynne Byler is a poet and cancer patient (mantle cell lymphoma) in remission. She worked for decades at an investment firm and was able to retire early. She now tutors inmates for the high school equivalency exam and runs a writing workshop at a local food pantry.

© 2023 *Intima: A Journal of Narrative Medicine*