

Under the CyberKnife

Category: Poems

written by Judson Scruton | March 25, 2016

Judson Scruton

Expectant, bound, I wait
for the robotic arm
to deliver

intense radiation
to cancerous prostate.

The probing eye of the radial arm
searches for my marked gland
to the soundtrack of my choosing—
gentle waves, then pounding surf.
Where am I? What am I?

Zeus ordered Prometheus chained to a rock
for creating man and stealing fire
and sent each evening an eagle
to search for and devour his liver,
the seat of rebellious emotions.

The physician du Laurens
in the glare of the Renaissance
chose the name “pro-sta-tae”
and thought it was one of a pair
and gave it a female gender.

What gender indeed
when this probing machine
is done with its
hypofractionated stereotactic radiation
of the wellspring of my engendering.

The good Web MD told me
that frequent ejaculations
reduce the odds of prostate cancer.
Two working wives, three children later...
now they tell me.

Prometheus grew his liver back each day
but finally Hercules
shot the bird and set him free.
In gratitude Prometheus told him how
to capture the Golden Apples of immortality.

Here on this rocky promontory
I hear the raking tides

of creation, destruction and release,
 an ancient plot of myth and science,
the body an ever-changing tale.

About the poet:

Judson Scruton teaches literature and writing at Fairfield University, in Connecticut, and frequently leads poetry seminars at the Wilton Library. He is a published poet and produced playwright.

About the poem:

"This poem was based on my experience in 2014 with radiation treatment for cancer. The poem's line breaks mirror my perception of the motions of the radiation arm of the Cyberknife during treatment."

Poetry editors:

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