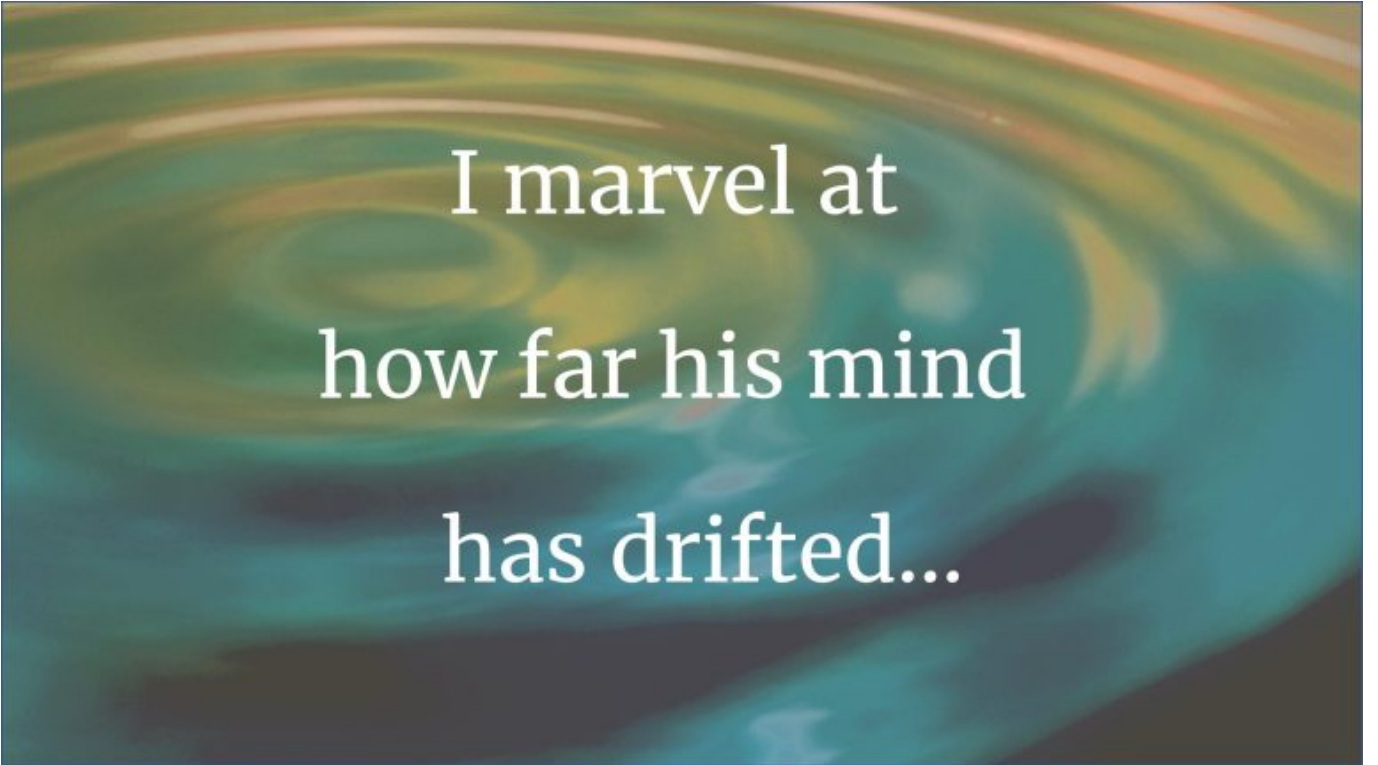


Anatomy

Category: Poems

written by Barry H. Gordon | November 4, 2022



I marvel at
how far his mind
has drifted...

I find him sitting
in the midst of his fellow residents
in the dining room
that doubles as an activity space.

His eyes are fixed
on the TV screen
that has a photo
of two young African American boys,
maybe brothers, too
like us,
enjoying the cardboard robot
they built together
and innocent to the many pangs
of loss
they will start to feel.

The activities assistant
asks such simple questions,
ones that some in the group
of lost and frozen minds
can find a plausible answer to
and have a momentary smile:
“What are those things coming
out of the robot’s head?
Are the boys having fun?”

Did you ever make a robot
with a friend when you were young?"

That last query invites a memory,
and he recalls his childhood friend,
Tippy, who once made his own robot
and not long after
moved away;
the memory brings with it
an unknowing smile.

I marvel at how far
his mind has drifted
and how much of it
he has lost
since the days he sat
in Anatomy class
as a frightened medical student
and learned the acronyms
that kept the body's parts
fixed for recall
whenever he was asked
to name them.