

He Plummeted

Category: Poems

written by Nina Bennett | February 11, 2011

Nina Bennett

He plummeted

into madness
as if into a run
for the Olympic bobsled team,
careened, thrashed,

crashed

into the rails
of his hospital bed,
whispered
about hidden
microphones, a plot
between his doctor and Visa
to keep the cure
for AIDS secret.

Eyes darted
from window
to door
as he yanked
 out
his IV line,
bellowed
about truth serum,
 he won't tell,
we can't make him
tell.

He had been a nurse, took care
of his lover and too many
friends. Nobody left now
to care for him. He died
alone

in a nursing home
while his support group met
without him, while they
held hands to end the meeting
with a prayer.

About the poet:

Nina Bennett, author of [*Forgotten Tears: A Grandmother's Journey Through Grief*](#), is a psychologist who has worked in the HIV field since the beginning of the epidemic. She has a subspecialty in bereavement issues, with a focus on perinatal loss. Her poetry and essays have appeared in numerous publications, including [*The Yale Journal for Humanities in Medicine*](#), [*Alehouse*](#), [*Oranges & Sardines*](#), [*Philadelphia Stories*](#), [*The Broadkill Review*](#), [*Grief Digest Magazine*](#) and the anthology [*Mourning Sickness*](#).

About the poem:

“For many years I facilitated a support group for people living with HIV. The man in this poem lived with and died of complications of HIV/AIDS in the days before combination therapy.”

Poetry editors:

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