

Lying in Wait

Category: Poems

written by Rachel Hadas | April 11, 2014

Rachel Hadas

Lying in bed and waiting for the purple
bruises to fade from my arms,
I remember the grinding pebbles underfoot
when I gave in to the muscular embrace of the ocean.
Now I rest in the wash of what has been accomplished.
A shallow golden river is pouring itself over stones,
over this empty husk, scooped shell of waiting
for transformation. Also transportation:
I need a fresh itinerary now
a dismantled world is being reassembled;
new map of stars I gaze at from the cool
tank of silence where I lie back, bathe,
and wait for the purple to fade.

About the poet:

Rachel Hadas is Board of Governors Professor of English at the Newark campus of Rutgers University, where she has taught for many years. Her latest collection of poems is [The Golden Road](#) (2012). A new collection, *Questions in the Vestibule*, is in preparation.

About the poem:

“On July 30, 2013, I had lengthy and successful laparoscopic surgery for diverticulitis, and this poem is about my first day resting back at home. The simultaneous senses of relief, peace, transformation and waiting for processes to unfold that the poem expresses are all connected not only with the aftermath of surgery but with a consuming and sustaining new love—in which sense the poem isn’t only about me after all, but about my beloved. (I should add that my son, an alternative-medicine practitioner, cured the deep blue, slow-to-fade bruises with a turmeric poultice the following week.)”

Poetry editors:

Johanna Shapiro and Judy Schaefer