

Mortality and Morbidity Conference

Category: Poems

written by Rosemary Zimmermann | February 21, 2020



I imagined something Victorian.
Perhaps I imagined a lecture hall filled with side-whiskered,
Sherlockian doctors, arguing case histories
like gentlemen playing chess with death—
or perhaps I imagined priests,
performing absolution at the bier.

I did not have to imagine the grey
underground conference room.
I was unsurprised at the bitter
coffee, the keening of the projector, the recalcitrant
bangs from the water pipes—

surprised only, perhaps, at the heavy thump
of the mundane: morbidity startling like turnips;
mortality remarkable as rain.