

Now a Lightness

Category: Poems

written by Fasih Hameed | June 12, 2009

4:57 am, Sunday

This week went
from caring with hope
for a lucid patient to facing
reality in advocating sanity
to an insane extended
family to haggling with specialists
to giving up time
and again telling Mary
she was dying and then watching
her cling to her lost life like
everyone else to
finally withdrawing all care
except for comfort
and comforting the now lucid family
while the breaths became
☒distant
and the pauses

☒prolonged
and everyone
cried, including myself,
when
☒the last one
☒left.

It was raining
when they called me. The family
said it just started, right before
the end. Like the sky had opened up
to let her in.

About the poet:

Fasih Hameed, a family physician in Santa Rosa, California, is currently completing a fellowship in integrative medicine for the underserved. After graduation he will continue to bring integrative medicine to community health centers in northern California. He has dabbled in the creative arts all his life and is currently focusing on music (guitar/vocals/percussion/composition), poetry and building wooden surfboards. In medical school he worked with the art group Students Against Right Brain Atrophy, and he still organizes and attends peaceful anti-atrophy rallies whenever possible.

About the poem:

“I wrote this poem as a resident, after guiding a patient and her family through a long and difficult journey towards a peaceful death.”

Poetry editors:

Judy Schaefer and Johanna Shapiro