

Pharmacy Visit

Category: Poems

written by Muriel Murch | August 16, 2019



You are a big man, a little heavy, but nothing
that can't be fixed by daily, brisk walks
or swept away by a
dose of cancer and a blast of treatment.
You have been called from your glass enclosure
to help me.

A productive, bronchial cough
is still with me—too long.
Chinese practitioners call this a lurking pathogen
tossing antibiotics into my weary kidneys to excrete
as a mindful French woman
with her midday steamed leeks.

You stand at a distance.
With an effort to be patient
as you explain,
"Bronchitis is an inflammation
of the bronchial tubes
of the lungs."

I do not scream at you.

I am not a feverish,
confused, old woman.
I am a nurse
and I know all that—
and more.

You speak calmly to me.
Patiently suggesting “Throat Comfort Tea,”
not the “Breathe Easy Tea”
I have been taking for difficult breathing.
You say it is incorrect.
You repeat.

“You need Sore Throat Relief tea.”
You have to be kidding me!
But you are not.
You are just getting me out of your busy life
so you can finish work
and go home.

I buy the “Throat Comfort Tea.”
The box instructions saying it is for the sore throat
I don’t have.
When I get home I drink it.
And at day’s end
reach for the whisky.