

Vital

Category: Poems

written by Micky Shorr | April 25, 2025



A student washes and braids my tangled hair...

Everyone is nice to me. First night
through morphine I hear nurses saying

they'll keep me on the surgical floor,
refuse to send me to the cancer unit.

They know I'm healthy, rich with lifeblood—
why view the damage this disease could do?

They are all so pleased when the wound is clean
in just two days. Later the head nurse gladly
reports, "All your margins are clear."

A student washes and braids my tangled hair,
says, "To help you remember you're lovely."

They talk to me person to person. The nurses
share their stories, like people often do.

One speaks of her young son, unable to deal
with his grandma's death.

I see myself in the hospital bed, retaining my
own healer energy, suggesting ways that can help.

Throughout the night I carry the burden of your
absence, have dreams about disappointment.

An orderly comes to take my vitals. In the dark
I breathe his nearness, swooning almost
in the spice of his manhood.