

**Fight or Flight**

With a plastic syringe,  
I dispense three beads  
of water to the hushed

beak. He is dying-  
quiet and ethereal  
in my hand. Meager efforts

evolve too late and fail to  
assuage the institutionalized  
condition from which it

suffers. A murder of crows  
shriek in violation and barrage  
the airways with outrage.

Apathy settles on alabaster  
masses. Eyes reflect the distortions  
of a whitewashed mind.

But I can't erase a youthful  
flight. Innocence unaware, the predator's  
proclivity – ruin.

The embodiment of ignorance  
breeds a "perceived threat".  
A coward's bullet explodes

your heart. I am left to consider  
unwavering racism  
amidst the velvety feathers.

## Surrender

Motivations aside, the marriage hangs,  
Unpredictable  
not just day by day, but  
like a spinning prism, twisting and  
flashing.  
*I promise to be true to you...*

Appearances conducted, the union waivers,  
Indecisively  
Not by choice of either partner, but  
as a lightning strike, jagged and  
crashing.  
*in good times and in bad...*

Coffins opened, the promise balances,  
Carelessly  
not by conscious negligence,  
the void unearths her sins, mocking and  
laughing.  
*in sickness and in health...*

Rages stifled, the bond trembles,  
Atomically  
not intended by his energy,  
they are magnets that repel, rejecting and  
clashing.  
*I will love you and honor you...*

A mind infected, the grasp releases,  
Desperately  
not for lack of love, but  
a surrender to madness, relentless and  
lasting  
*all the days of my life.*

## WAITING

Beyond the threshold of the formidable establishment  
Harried souls consider circumstance and fate.  
A congregation of characters seeking asylum  
from their own collection of demons.

An unspoken language conveys a shared agony,  
a paralyzing darkness.  
Each being invocating for divine counsel,  
internally pleading for an hour of safe-haven.

This pained herd of creatures with a common  
wolf at its back,  
offers up plastic cards for a promise of salvation;  
dollars of the disturbed.

The waiting room is a psychological limbo  
where invisible fiends prey and feed on fragile minds.  
Breathing ceases with the opening of the hallowed door.  
Who among these vexed souls is the chosen one?

Heaven is home to the delusional.  
What conjurings transpire to rectify the shadowed brain?  
Various experts shepherd patients to private chambers  
Where sins and secrets purge and float on air.

Cynicism and truth keep me from the light.  
Twice, I confessed in the shrouded box without reprieve,  
an eternity of "Hail Marys" abandoned at conception.  
Now, I plead only for conformity of mind.

The door is open for me; a chance of rebirth,  
a remodeled creation of self.  
No saints or sorcery can cure my condition,  
no faith, no hope, maybe nothing, maybe.

A familiar gaze, devoid of condemnation  
affirms a communion born of trust.  
Recognition evokes pain in my chest.  
Tears leak from unsuspecting eyes.

## AWAKENING

Glass implodes, fracturing the enclosure  
Through poison veils  
Oxygen cuts like jagged shears.

Scattered diamonds form a brilliant coronet  
On bleak cement  
A grotesque sleep interrupted.

The stead-fast rhythm warped by desperation  
Beneath dead weight  
My beating heart persists.

Had it untangled the mass of theorems  
In perfect chambers  
My consciousness eschewed?

Did the stable drumming of its intent  
Through vast atriums  
Hush the clamor from my head?

Bruised lungs expand involuntarily  
With newborn terrors  
What alchemy can fix me now?

## ILLUSION

First snow

Streaks the portrait of a home

Dusting a renovated roof

An exposed structure suffers the weight

Beneath expectations.

First snow

Blankets the lawnmower

Quieting proven capabilities

A newfound resource endures the restraint

Within a confined space.

First snow

Alights on grass and tree

Murmuring, "Time is up."

One scarlet leaf committed to evolve

Amidst a tangle of habit.