

POETRY

## Love poem

My darling, I've plied the true and saving grace  
amongst recalcitrant hearts, recidivist kidneys  
that sing the chronic song, wiped tears from faces,  
measured liver spans as if they were bridges  
and I were always spanning to you, to you.

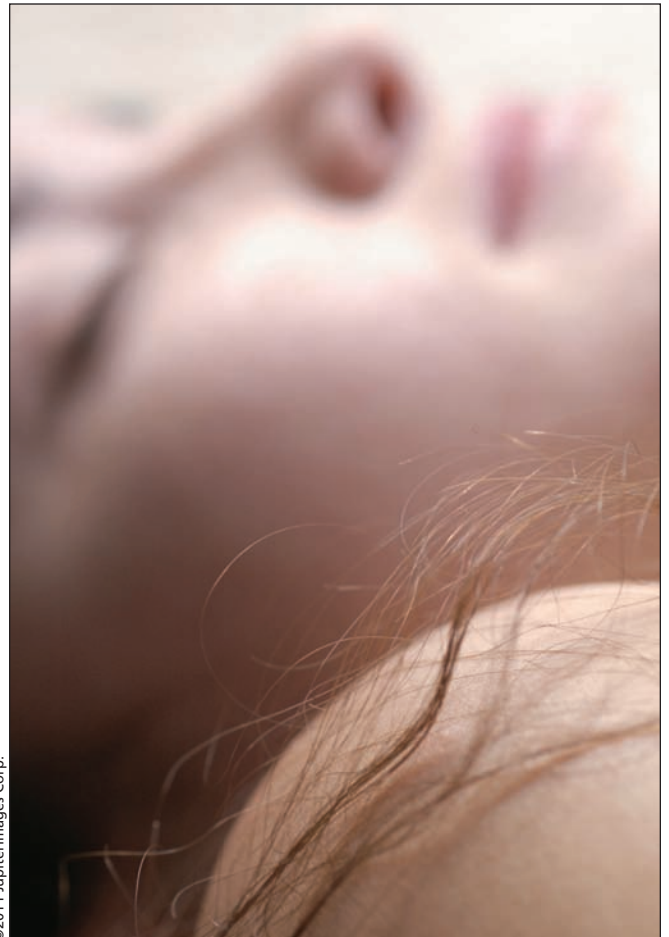
I remember looking out the window of the ICU  
and seeing the world, gold and green, women  
with strollers, cars and splash, and there was love:  
leveraged as the fallback plan, the one line held  
or damn the campaign, there being no other side  
to join.

I'm tired. My hands were in ten bodies today,  
but this morning, I rolled over bad-back griefs,  
stirred by the early AM alarm, and spied your face:  
impassive, gently breathing. There is no way  
to lie there and not be Herculean: able to wish  
the massive hospital away, able to touch your hair  
and multiply the wishes to a thousand, falling wide  
and long off the mark.

My darling bride, wield  
your beauty as surpassing, as your say:  
I walk to the hospital with recalcitrant heart,  
with wishes dwindling to a to-do list  
that prepares me for the OR, for the wards,  
for that window where South Street peeks out  
and Halifax could be any other day, a different precipice.  
I could be another man, broad and limber, tall  
and fierce, withstanding pain; but I'm a doctor,  
with catheters in the dam, the splash of blood  
and the splash of wishes long fallen wide,  
off the mark we made.

**Shane Neilson**  
Family physician  
Guelph, Ont.

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