

## Bottleneck

■ Cite as: *CMAJ* 2019 January 21;191:E82. doi: 10.1503/cmaj.181270

So many years,  
so many brains —  
a collective think.  
Gathering strategy:

how to unlock  
silence  
deadlock  
bottleneck?  
Find a way to breathe life  
into words  
about death

For a young woman  
with advanced cancer  
her canvas stretched taut  
by an insistent wind  
no tack offers a curve  
that brings relief

Our need to know  
Her hopes  
Her wishes  
Her plans  
should her dreams  
be dissolved  
by invasive cells

Decision?  
Incision?  
CPR? DNAR?  
Home?  
Here?  
Where?

Her room — barren  
where she lies stripped down  
to a blue gown

The thick air  
parts  
an opening made by the question  
She finally asks of another  
an-other  
The woman who  
each and every day  
takes away her tray —

kitchen staff.  
No skill  
No training  
in anything  
Medical  
is the chosen one

Asked about choice  
in this dry land  
that holds no buds  
where bad choices form layers  
much as geologic strata  
only reveal their history  
over time

They talk  
Of life  
Of death  
Of God

Aside  
we wait for words  
that would have us  
carry her deeper  
on dark paths  
like pouring sand onto desert

Or

Instead  
for words that would allow us  
to lift her,  
a winged escort  
to help her sail home



"Bottleneck" by Dr. Gerri Frager. Wheel-thrown vessel, carved, hand-built lid representing wings/feathers and hands, underglazed, fired with the naked raku process.

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This article has been peer reviewed.