

Full Code

You came to me with gasping breaths
and a list of medical problems we've learned to shorten
with acronyms. That doesn't make them better.

When I called her, your daughter didn't care
to come to the hospital. *This happens so many times,*
she said, *but he never really dies.*

Take me back to the last time you felt
normal, the last time you felt well. Yesterday?
A week ago? A month? A year?

Half the body paralyzed, bedbound, a sacral ulcer to bone,
a feeding tube and cataracts and a leaky heart valve.
A daughter who will not come.

Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow
you'll never be well again. But those are words
I'm not allowed to say.