

Intensive Care: Their island home



Illustration by Jim M'Guinness

You recognize them
now that you have been there—
languid bodies loved and lost
every body movement fluid
like limbs surrendered by bones.

There is no language in limbo,
a monitored island of alarms
that speaks in foreign voice
to all but the significant others
who never expect it to end.

Time is measured by
visiting hours—bodies come and go,
leave spouses stunned and
speechless. Can anyone tell
who is more lifeless?

For those who reach
this island home
foreign voices can be heard
only by those remaining,
whatever moment they are in.

—Henry Langhorne, MD

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