

Waiting

As I lie exhausted in my hospital bed behind a blue curtain,
(Waiting, waiting for what?)

A single question occupies my thoughts with a clarity that the dark night of my *aleness* had not allowed,
Until now.

Today—

Friends

Students

Clinician-Colleagues

Nurses

(some whom I did not know well)—made a seemingly endless succession of

Unexpected

Unscheduled

Uninvited

Unwanted

Visits.

Some filled my room with flowers and fruit and my favorite music and stayed for hours.

Others were not able to advance more than two steps into my room,

Not able to stay beyond a few awkward sentences.

As if they feared my melancholy were contagious.

As night and my *aleness* return and the telephone is silent,

A single question continues to occupy my thoughts:

Why did you not visit?

You the sole person I wanted to see.

You the one person I needed to hear say: "The world would not be the same without you in it."

Yes, I know it is not that simple.

But as I lie waiting finally without hope,

I realize that I have both lost and gained more than I could ever have imagined possible.

Sometimes it takes silence and the sweet confinement of lying alone in a hospital bed behind a blue curtain,

To know what brings you *life*.

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