

Legs

Your legs are thick like tree limbs
You climb ladders
You chase me until my lungs give out
It chases you until your lungs give out
A slow progression, like honey dripping downhill in January
And then all at once bursting through your body like popcorn in a microwave

Your legs are losing muscle mass
The space where your calves once protruded is a bean bag of sagging skin
They aren't as skinny now as they will get
You still dance, your eyes closed feeling the rhythm with your arms
I can see the pain, but you keep to the beat

You stare off a lot. What are you thinking?
Now that you're gone, I wish I would have asked
It's an elephant in the room, you see
We're afraid to ask because we're afraid to know
But sorrow sought us anyway
You can't lift your legs now, your cane is no longer your escort
You're stuck

You ask to take a shower
We are small women but do not oppose
The water is a steaming waterfall washing away the hurt
Until it ends

The doctors watch your legs deteriorate
They watch your soul weaken
The chemo has you tied up like Gulliver
But who is brave enough to stop the ambush and tell you that it's over?
Why didn't you ask how much time you had?
Did you not want to know, or was a matter that could not be ignored somehow disregarded?

You grunt as I move your needle legs from straight to bent
You wait until we leave the room
And then you watch hues of color turn into TV static
The TV is off now
You're gone

Your legs are now tree trunks
Your melody is the beach
You dance your way to the foaming ocean

Your lungs and legs intact
You're better off there don't you think?
Mom will be up there soon
She can't wait to see you
Save her a spot on the beach, ok?
Save me one too