
POETRY | SPRING 2015

Line of Beauty

By Arlene Weiner

The young fellow
took off the dressing, said with feeling,
It's beautiful.

Three days after surgery, my incision
straight, already healing.
He left me undressed.

Twelve days after surgery,
my PCP looked, said, *It's beautiful.*
Explained, *If you've ever seen
orthopedic surgery,
It's brute force.*

I've submitted to the knife before:
legs stripped, womb taken,
a chunk of back punished
for harboring promiscuous cells.
This is a new thrill: an insertion.

Maybe I'll get a bikini for exhibition
of my best part, the surgeon's art.
I won't count on it, with sutures
still in. An infection can spell ruin,
or looseness about some prohibition:

crossing my legs, bending too far.
Now it's a thin red line. In the future
I'll make it a scar.

Arlene Weiner has been a cardiology technician, a college instructor, an editor, and a research associate in educational applications of cognitive science. Poet Joy Katz wrote of *Escape Velocity*, a collection of Weiner's poems (Ragged Sky 2006): "I want to keep my favorite of these beautifully alert, surprising poems with me as I grow old." A MacDowell Colony fellow, Weiner's work can be found in *Hawk and Handsaw*, *Off the Coast*, *Pleiades*, and *Poet Lore*, anthologized in *Along These Rivers* (Quadrant), *Eating Her Wedding Dress* (Ragged Sky) and *Thatchwork* (Delaware Valley Poets), and read by Garrison Keillor on *Writer's Almanac*. She is a member of Pittsburgh Poetry Exchange and the Squirrel Hill Poetry Workshop.