
POETRY | SPRING 2013

Overwhelmed

By Kendra Peterson

He was a lean sophisticate with piercing eyes
and claimed he wanted just to hear it straight. So gently
I told the harsh and ugly truth
of glioblastoma multiforme
my practiced words unresectable and infiltrating,
radiation and chemotherapy, too.
Unflinching he requested more
not wanting to be spared
statistics and prognosis, and could I imagine
with him how the end might look?
Experience had taught too well, so with careful strokes
I painted a candid picture with reassurance
that I would hold his hand
throughout. Satisfied he stood
then crumpled to the floor in faint
and when he came around with pleading eyes
requested, Doc please, don't ever speak to me
that way again.

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