
POETRY | SPRING 2019

Pascal, the Hard Way

By Barry Peters

Think of the dying lying
quietly, dice in hands
hanging over bedrails,

wondering what numbers
will come up, besides theirs,
if they toss them down:

nothing to lose except
the belief in non-belief.
The same loss you'll feel

if you wager prayer,
Mr. and Mrs. Atheist,
during your vigil there.

But what could it hurt
to roll them bones?
After all, pony-tailed

hospice guy promises
nobody's feeling
any pain, least of all

the croupier in custodian's
clothes next door sweeping
clean the tile floor.

Barry Peters lives in Durham, NC, with his wife, the writer Maureen Sherbondy. His work has appeared, or is forthcoming, in The American Journal of Poetry, Best New Poets 2018, Connecticut River Review, The Healing Muse, Medical Literary Messenger, Miramar, The National Poetry Review, Negative Capability, Poetry East, Presence, Rattle, South Florida Poetry Journal, The Southampton Review, Sport Literate, Third Wednesday, and elsewhere.

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