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POETRY | SPRING 2015

## The Phone

By Samantha Greenberg

My phone rings and I know it's you,  
I don't pick up. I know what to do.  
I drop everything, take the stairs two at a time,  
Only when I get to you, you can't define  
What you want, what you need or even really speak.  
I don't know what to tell you—you were you to me last week.

Today you're two: throwing tantrums left and right.  
That's nice you don't want to shower; I will win this fight.  
You knock over your water, and then look up at me,  
"Samantha! Don't go anywhere. I really have to pee."  
I pause for a moment, take a breath and look around.  
Why am I the only one here? Everyone else is bound

To go, to travel, to work or just to leave,  
I look up and wonder, *Where is my reprieve?*  
In D.C. Or Vegas. Or out on a date  
For over ten hours. It must have been great.  
"I need a pen to sign my pillowcase. Give it to me now."  
To the morphine pulsing through your body, I feel I must bow.

"I want my bong and I want it right now."  
It was funny the first time. Except how  
You demand the nebulizer, huff and pound your feet...  
"I need a towel. Now. Turn off the freaking heat."  
The heat is not on. It's all in your head.  
I don't think you're ever getting out of that bed.

Two hours later, you are sort of you  
Cantankerous, irascible with nothing to do  
But moan and yell, and maybe complain.  
"I don't want the bread toasted. Are you absolutely insane?"  
The mug hits the floor. This time it breaks.  
"Look what you have to do... Pick it up for Pete's sake!"

I look up and remember that you are not you.  
You're cancer. You're morphine. You're in need of O<sub>2</sub>.  
I don't expect you to be extremely nice,  
To change your bullish personality would not suffice.  
Just for a moment, however, I need to be alone,  
This window is mine... but there goes my phone.

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