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POETRY | SPRING 2013

## Cut It Out

By **Kee MacFarland**

Cut it out.

You know how much I hate it,  
how desperate I am to make it stop, be gone.

We both know you can do it.

You have what it takes to cut it out;  
the ability, the knowledge, the opportunity.

You have my support, my insistence,  
My pathetic pleading.

And yet, you hesitate, prevaricate, insinuate.

You are the deliberate one, want certainty,  
want more time.

We are badly paired in this regard.

I am the anxious one, want answers;  
am frantic about time.

I want you to be Nike, for God's sake.

Just do it; get me through it.

Don't give me those excuses,  
the painful clichés that others use:  
too big, too complicated, timing is wrong,  
bad location, too inaccessible,  
too risky, not in my best interest,

I'm not strong enough.

Or, my personal favorite (and yours):

Not enough data.

You know I adore you.

Well, maybe you don't;

We don't know each other that well –  
it's been a whirlwind relationship.

You are handsome, gentle, kind;  
and you are the only one I have.

I will remember you all my life,  
while I – I am just one of the many  
who need you.

We both know that I depend on you utterly,  
and that I have no say in this relationship.

I know that you care about me and my well-being,  
but you might decide not to cut it out,

and abandon me tomorrow as, I know, you have others before me.

You hold all the cards.  
Will you take pity on me  
if I confess that I find this intolerable?  
Try to see me as special, see me as strong.  
Take a chance on me, even if I don't measure up  
to your criteria.  
I know. I know that character isn't part of your criteria  
but we're not talking elective surgery here.  
Okay, maybe you are; you're the voter.  
I, however, am talking life and death.  
You peer at scans and scopes and see cancer every day.  
You decide if it stays in or comes out.  
But this is about my life, my cancer.  
And we both know that only you can cut it out.

### **Kee MacFarlane 6/5/11**

Dedicated to my thoracic surgeon, Dr. Anthony Perricone ,who waited for the results of seven scans to determine whether my cancer had metastasized to my bones (in which case, no surgery), or whether there were just a lot of broken bones lighting up the scans

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Kee MacFarlane is a social worker, a writer and a cancer patient intent upon becoming a cancer survivor at the Moores Cancer Center at UCSD in San Diego. Writing about the transformative effects of cancer, through poems like "Cut it Out" has been a very healing form of therapy.

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