**Do Not Resuscitate**

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I can say

your father is dying.

I can say

wishing will not make it so,

belief doesn't change a thing.

I can say

love does not conquer all,

miracles are pretty stories told in church,

the movies you saw as a child are lies,

blind hope is not a recipe for success,

underdogs usually lose,

death is not the worst thing, it is just

the last thing.

But for you that is not true.

I can say

we have to pretend

that we can bring him wheezing

back to you like an old accordion,

chest pleating in and out,

singing his customary songs,

oxygen bumping its hurdy-gurdy way again

through his ancient heart.

But how can I tell you how

someone will shout down the hallway, kneel

frantic on the bed,

lean his fists against that old breastbone, sharp, frail,

one onethousand, two onethousand, and count it out.

I can say

we should not do this.

He will never be the same.

I can say

if it were my father.

I can say

do not confuse resuscitation

with resurrection, although

neither works particularly well.

You look like you are drowning,

pallid and slow in the waiting room’s

underwater light.

So. Tell me.

Tell me again.

Tell me about your father.