

Magdalena Struwig

## By your side

For my sister, a stroke survivor

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I've been with you through it all:  
the shock, the sadness, the disbelief.

I was there when you were breathing  
by whispering, mysterious machine:  
not aware of the solemnity surrounding you  
like a heavy blue blanket;  
neither aware of the dismal chorus screaming  
through the empty and restless passages

of my mind; I was there through it all.  
And now that you have to live at a slower pace –  
careful, fragile and so despondent –  
now that your agony and discontent  
reduce you sometimes  
to the enraged turbulence of a resentful child,  
I am helpless, useless.

It was so much easier then to hold your quiet hand  
than it is now to keep your spirit standing tall.

But I am still here despite it all, always  
sitting by your side, waiting to hear  
your laughter sprout again.

**Conflicts of interest** The author has no conflict of interest to declare.