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Blindness: perceptions under mechanical ventilation

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I wrote these words and constructed these images after conversations with a patient who I attended during my first year of critical care fellowship. He was 71 years old and had been mechanically ventilated two times in his life because of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease exacerbations. After ICU discharge, I followed him until hospital discharge.

When one reaches the ridge
of the stone castle,
the inconsistency of the sea dawns on.

as a baby cry going
to the undesired cradle;

as the birds coming
from a sunny vacation.

When the moon's essence
breaks in through the lonesome thought,
the glasses fog up with a cloud of breath!
like the window wiping feelings
out of smiles,
like butterflies floating
in the rain.

When one comes upon the edge
of the abyss,
and life spreads out your arms
and you cannot perceive little ants
eating up your memories,

the
wind can stroke the inner door,

and then your eyes
must realize:

Life is something
wild

Touching your ears
While your mind
tries
to

puzzle out
the honest truth.

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