

CAROL A. ADAMS

Time around Breast Cancer – Diagnosis

It seems like the beginning of the end
I am sent black-rimmed messages
by the brain, master of a body that betrays
no less
Who can I trust now?

My thoughts run a whirlwind course
I find everyone too accessible
converse in never ending track
learn an easy seriousness

Confusion is a cloak, impossible
to shrug off. Yet I am deeply touched
at the kindness of others. Food, flowers,
books and wine appear at my door
Sporadic silence plays havoc

with my emotions. My gentle husband
digs in the garden, staving off misfortune
I draw strength from wearing vivid colours
In a dream, I decide
to change my hair style

By the bed, the book with its improbable
ending, lies unread on the floor
My blood pulses, beating out its own measure
I pick up the count of the clock in the hall
engrossed in its indecent obsession
with the moment

Early bird song soothes me
God's gift to those who lie awake
Around me, lost things gather
for an instant, then fade away
leaving a tiny nucleus of hope
scarcely visible to the naked eye
It will have to do

Time around Breast Cancer – Return to Health

Returning to health is like
Coming back to the ocean,
meeting myself very suddenly on
a lonely stretch of beach
against a background of wandering
wraiths of spray

Out there is the same brisk business of waves
each one destined to lose
its identity, flow into every crevice
like liquid memory,
even the shingle rearranging itself into
a new topography

In the space of a few blue-green moments
I keep perfectly still,
the better to know how much I have changed
Breathing in the wind pumps my blood
with a power I didn't think I had

My mind rises through boundaries
at one with busy gulls at play
in details of the breeze.
And I had thought that I was
out of love with life

But now, I am in touch with
that part of me the sea has always been
and by and by, I notice there's even
a certain joy,
surging way deep inside

Carol A. Adams's work has recently been featured in the book, The Missing Line, published by Inanna Publications and Education Inc. Her poetry has also appeared in a number of literary journals and anthologies. Recently, Carol won a major battle with breast cancer and her work reflects the range of emotions encompassed in the ordeal and the resulting strength, both as a person and as a writer.