

POETRY | FALL 2021

7:30 Start

By Photine Liakos

Is it blue to calm and soothe
or to contrast with the red that will inevitably come,
beading on the surface—
a string of red pearls.

Is it for me—
bringing me to some tranquil place before I start.
Or for you—
blue sky before the force of sleep takes you.

Lights too bright for shadows.
No place for gray.

There is a silence only I hear
Beneath
the voices in the room, the music on the radio, the rhythmic cadence of the ventilator.

It wraps around me
in the shattering split second before the scalpel presses in
and the work begins.

Photine Liakos has spent her career as an orthopaedic surgeon. She received both her undergraduate degree in Comparative Arts and her medical degree from Washington University in St. Louis. Writing makes her feel like she is more than a small cog in a big machine. Baking is her love language. She is endlessly fascinated by all things related to J.R.R. Tolkien and The Beatles.

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