

---

POETRY | SPRING 2023

## Uncontrollable

By Sara Ethier

Grey crept in from the window  
Shadows climbed the wall  
Behind us

I didn't want to see it  
I was on the couch  
But it came like it always did

laying on the floor,  
blue striped pajamas.  
loopy blanket tucked  
under watery legs.  
head resting on an arm

angry cells mingle,  
cranking the heat.  
knives glinting with danger  
tease synovial joints.  
crackers calling from the table

raw salmon feet,  
gritty behind dark lashes.  
nervy spots smirk  
along the edge of a cuff.  
the baby napping in a different room

I grabbed a thought  
It was stickier than usual  
The meds might not be working

My son turned towards the light to find me  
Tightened jaw, he pushed onto his elbows  
Staring at me, ghost face, chlorine eyes

You should trade me for a normal kid

I held the heavy rock inside of him  
A crushing urge to yank my hair out  
His body slid back to the carpet

The mutation tightens its grip  
There must be something else to fix him  
But it came like it always did

---

**Sara Ethier is an educator and rare disease advocate. She lives in Calgary, Canada.**

---

© 2023 *Intima: A Journal of Narrative Medicine*