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I Ask My Friend How She Feels: Her Response

By Simona Carini

On chemo, I open my eyes
and it is always infusion day,
the weeks in between fused.

On chemo, I steep milky tea,
keep constant watch,
as fear stages a coup every hour.

I wash lettuce leaf by leaf
and, short of breath, I smell
cells killed by the drugs, metallic.

On chemo, I drop a frame,
pick up the shards, cannot compose
the full picture.

On chemo, I look around for
my running shoes, the favorite blue shirt I lost,
to put them on again.

On chemo, I watch a blue jay hop,
a squirrel dart and I want off:
off chemicals, off cancer.

I dance a few steps,
an oil-slicked bird thrashing its wings around,
calling it flying.

Simona Carini writes nonfiction and poetry and has been published in various venues, in print and online. Born in Perugia, Italy, a graduate of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart (Milan, Italy) and of Mills College (Oakland, CA), Carini lives in Northern California with her husband and works as an academic researcher in Medical Information Science. See more of her work at simonacarini.com

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