

To the end of her life

Two flights up,
she cradled a swollen belly
in memorabilia,
in the bowels of her bed.

Her sallow face told me
how near to death she must be.

She paused and stared into space,
asking not for medicine, but for prayers.
I led her to find those she knew.

I'd learned some, not others.
In my confusion, I searched
for a "likeness" of her God
(shaped with the palms of my hands)
to sit there beside her and smile. I led her
to tell Him what she wanted Him to know—
to take away her terrible pain,
to forgive,
to bless.

She wanted never
to be alone again, never
to die each day, never
to really die.

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