

Firing squad

Jessica Frey, BA, MD

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Correspondence

Dr. Frey
Jef0017@hsc.wvu.edu

MORE ONLINE

🔊 Audio

Listen to Dr. Frey read this poem.

NPub.org/kswrdy

We are in the lineup, backs against the wall.
Funny uniform, these long white coats.

The father in the hospital room draws his gun:
A loaded question.

If she was your daughter, what would you do?

We stare speechless at the girl in the corner,
trapped in the bed by rainbow colored wires and tubes.
Words start to tumble out of us:
Myoclonic status
Burst suppression
Diffuse anoxic brain injury

Bang, a warning shot:
That doesn't answer my question.

He cocks his weapon of choice:
His index finger pointed at each of us in turn,
and his eyes, pleading for the truth.

We look at the EEG
Give it another day
And pretend to know
Leave the tube in
What all those squiggly lines mean

And when it's my turn,
I put my hands up in the air
I don't know
I clench my eyes shut, waiting for the bullet
that is sure to come spiraling my way.

Bang.
Bang.
Bang.
We all fall down.
And we all return to ashes.

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