Snow globe

Jessica Frey, MD

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Correspondence

Dr. Frey

Jess.el.frey@gmail.com

It was after I finished showing her the scans
that she nose-dived away from the computer
and back to the side of the bed.
She interlaced her fingers with the patient's own
and begged her to do something,
 anything,
smile, wake up, say your name,
 anything.

She didn't ask me any questions.
Seventeen millimeters.
With a midline shift like that, anyone can see:
the brain is not where it belongs.

Her world is a snow globe now.
She holds it in the palm of her hand.
Shake shake:
maybe if she shakes it hard enough,
 maybe,
she can rearrange the snow,
the hospital bed, and the lady lying there.

Maybe everything will lift up and
 float
for a moment
before settling back down

like gold leaves
that crumple into brown
and float for a moment
before dusting the ground.

I want to take the snow globe from her hands.
I want to tell her it doesn't work that way.

But instead I back out of the room,
afraid that if I stay, I may disturb the snow.
And just for a moment,
everything is right where it belongs.

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