

AT THE SOUL FACTORY

by Lynda Appino

5 nights and counting...

I.

Hospice death is birth in reverse;
they will call it a process,
you will call them Angels.

a holy trinity of

haldol ativan dilaudid

stun the laborer during these moments collecting like a plot-less conclusion,
nothing happens while waiting for absolutely Nothing to happen.

II.

In a recliner I listen for his scattered breaths,
this man in labor
who seeded my life

(convinced I will die in this chair
before he does)

tick and tock the Endless clock...



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III.

They've hauled out dozens since we arrived,
it's piecework here at the Soul Factory

Politely

"We are closing your door for a moment..."
the hushed glide of a ghostly gurney passes our door,
a weightless gong signals another soul's dignified departure

IV.

Good God what an obstinate man!

To carry that body for 93 years
only to throw it away
in a poorly-timed hunger strike,
a toddler in full tantrum.

I maintain my Watch over a white sheet

The eeriest absence here?
Mealtimes.



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V.

I wonder idly where the ghosts hang out
in this factory of departures so ripe
for a good haunting, a decent ghost revolt.
But no, this antiseptic white holding tank
discourages attachments to the world,
attachments like old wooden row boats, splintered oars, soft flannel shirts,
and grass-covered hills, northern lakes where fish jump and osprey soar
the tender touch of fresh and bare skin warmed by sun...

VI.

The raven-hued hawk flies just outside
the picture window,
completes an elliptical fly-bye,
then dips flayed fingers in salute and
shoots off into the sky.