

Where Are You Now?

(For Ruth)

I try to imagine your day.

Do you get up to see your husband and son
before public transportation
whisks them towards their routines
and their private thoughts of you?

Maybe you sleep through this early morning ritual
if the night was not kind to you.

Maybe you're tired.

Maybe you're tired of being tired.

I see you climbing out of bed, carefully
descending the steps, avoiding the cats that
wait for you to acknowledge their very existence.

Do you eat breakfast?

I can see your husband leaving something special
to entice your appetite.

Do you watch Matt Lauer?

No one would fault you if
your focus were mostly internal now.

But, I know you voted early.

I know many who are perfectly healthy
but still can't find the ballot box.

You put the dishes in the sink,
to be considered later.

The piano awaits
but you don't want to sit on that hard bench to play.

You'd love to crochet
except the med's
stole your focus for the right number of stitches.

So I see you sinking onto the couch with a prayer
to get through this day
to be whole: wife and mom and friend

to care about what happens next
to fully believe that you are not alone
to realize every morning that you are,
in fact, a Beloved Child of God,
a Dear Granddaughter, Daughter, Niece,
Sister, Cousin, Wife, Mother and Friend;

And finally, to lay down this gauntlet:
to refuse to be defined by your role as Patient.
To grit your teeth
and prove that there is so much more
to your story.

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