

After the MRI

It should have looked like vacant tracks
crossing quiet plains of your torso at night.
Instead it glowed with countless stars—
a Milky Way wrapped round your spine.

I had feared—no, expected—a smattering. Never this.
So many brilliant shards. Terrifying yet strangely beautiful.
You said the image made the disease unequivocally real—
this was a one-way journey. No return possible.

Struck mute by the enormity of the terrain,
mere passenger on this train of stars. Later,
would pace overgrown yard, search the sky
for constant constellations. All was scattered.

Lost again without atlas or compass, feeling my way
in the dark. As you are. A youthful me yearned
to explore, hang multi-colored maps, fill them with pins.
Collect photos and postcards from places I'd been.

First my daughter, then you—took me
beyond such places, beyond imagination.
The night sky isn't colorful, but its comets whisper
secrets as they flash. There are so many

galaxies left to explore, including the one
carving luminous paths in your body's landscape,
strange tide of synapses pulsing on long-forgotten shores.
Perhaps the heavens had a plan when you flowed to me.

You say it's a trip best taken alone,
but I've come too far to turn back now.
Maybe this is my journey: to explore human continents,
follow fractured neurons wherever they lead.