

Dennis E. Noonan – Two Poems

The Verdict

Squamous, says the slicer on the phone
Small, but we need to get it out
I sit down to ask:
Cancer?

Yes, small. We need you to come in.
I can almost see his hands
Beckoning, eager for the work
Mindless of my inborn
Aversion to sharpened edges.

Cancer.
The forbidden word.
Jehovah's curse upon my tribe.
The fearful scythe that lops
Like stalks of grain
Ancestral oaks.
My parents
Their siblings
Their parents.
Inevitable, passing kin to kin.
Fate's gift to my children
And theirs.

Now, the mind spirals with disquiet.
Every new dawn will be met
With a question
Because the Reaper will not knock
When he comes for his due.

The learned slicer with honed steel
Bids to exorcise a curse.

How many more calls,
How many more fateful cuts
Must be endured?

The questions ring out
Like an unanswered phone.

Dennis E. Noonan is retired and writing poetry, short essays and humor. He lives in Wellesley, MA.