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## Women at a Sphygmomanometer

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## *Woman At A Sphygmomanometer*

Here she is again  
drawn like a Reno gambler,  
a desperate  
and beautiful woman  
pulling quarter after quarter  
from her purse, waiting  
for the numbers to turn.  
She's afraid this life  
is killing her. Once more  
the risk she's taken for love  
and a little satisfaction  
is murder on her  
rocketing pulse rate. How long  
can the numbers rage  
before she's seen enough,  
slept the last time  
with blood thumping in her ears  
while a man beside her  
snoozes like a cat.  
She's the bait,  
the bird caught in a bush  
praying her railing heart  
doesn't give out. The cuff  
squeezes her arm  
like the grasp of an angel  
angry she won't come peacefully.  
She's wired up, her desperation  
gone digital, lit up  
like the oddsboard at a race.