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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.