

Spring 2011

What the Doctor Said

Gary Leising

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Leising, Gary (2011) "What the Doctor Said," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 74 , Article 34.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss74/34>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in CutBank by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

WHAT THE DOCTOR SAID

Imagine a countdown clock, ten, nine
eight, so on, but it's, say, four digits long.

It started at four nines, nine-nine-nine-eight
then down. In a long while, you get to four eights,

the same interval till four sevens. They glow
like hooks on the digital readout. The countdown

clock, you know, by its nature, will stop.
And then: an explosion, or a light somewhere turns on

or off, or the piercing drone of an alarm.
Maybe a rocket launches. Who knows—we know

only the countdown stops. That's your body now,
that's this disease. Here's the thing:

imagine the digits are foreign to you. In time,
you get the sequencing, sort of, know when it will click

to four identical digits, lights arranged all alike.
So when it says six-six-six-seven, the next

could be the last or it could keep going.
No matter what I tell you now

you'll never look away.