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“My Fears Dissolve / into Tranquil Blue”

Venera Fazio

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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Venera Fazio († 1946-2017)

In Gratitude

A loving husband
now also devoted.

Every evening, on the telephone
a daughter's caring voice,
I got your back covered, Mom.
Call on me.
It doesn't matter
if it's in the middle of the night.

My seven-year-old granddaughter, Alice,
courageously lit a candle at the front of the church:
May my Nonna get better.

Compassionate sister, brother and cousin
travel often from a long distance
to comfort me.

For several months after brain surgery
thoughtful friends and relatives
brighten my spirits with bouquets
of sunflowers, roses, carnations.

In your love
I am strong.

The Mirror

The woman braves a look in the mirror. Her husband had just left for home. When he walked into the hospital room, he had cried at the sight of her.

In the mirror is a gargoyle image of her former self. Without the bandage, the left side of her skull is swollen twice its size. The surgeon had mowed a zigzag swath of hair. The right side of her face is taut. Her bottom lip droops sideways. She tries to talk. A wail emerges. The tumour has swallowed up her words.
Her eyes are pools of dark terror.

The Imaginable

Whenever anxiety
overcomes my spirit
I walk, with purpose
to the nearby shores
of Lake Huron.

Meditating on the depth
and vastness of the water
uncoils
my negative thoughts.

Other times
I imagine the panic
toward my cancer illness
riding on the crest of waves.

Again and again
my fears dissolve
into tranquil blue.

Soon there is a room
in my heart
to believe
in a healed body.