

The New Criterion

Poems

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Dialysis

by [Floyd Skloot](#)

In my brother's blind and dying
eyes I was forever young.
He rocked and slept to the sound
of my voice as long as memory
played its tune. Then he woke
to speak of vast silver platters
heaped with meat and bouquets
of cheese, hot loaves the way
we found them on the island.
He said my breath had carried
the dream along. We were back
to back again in the Valiant's
front seat, doors gaping and feet
on the seething summer streets
of Flatbush. As his eyes closed
and sullied blood spun in loops
of plastic tubing, I watched
my brother closing down his life.
Time fell apart in his mind,
leaving nowhere but the past
for him to live. His will to sit
through this ritual cleansing
weakened as each day blended
until only sleep remained.

Floyd Skloot

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