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## Nursing Center

Lu Spurlock

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# Nursing Center

— by Lu Spurlock

Maggie watched "All My Children"  
waits for hers  
and greets each visitor  
with a wistful smile

Fat-boy Bob  
sneaks up behind "pretty girls"  
blows hot breath in their ears  
and giggles

sheet-wrapped  
oblivious to her wrinkled bottom  
sagging through the bathchair seat  
Phyllis sings her way to the shower

tugging at his oxygen mask  
Ted begs an attendant  
for a cigarette

Mary Elizabeth carries her walker  
while pushing Agnes' wheelchair  
to the card room

latched behind a half-door  
Edward clutches at passers-by  
asks them to let him out  
so he can roam the halls  
in his pajama top

listening to 90-year-old Ida  
tell about yesterday's visit  
from Mamma and Papa  
Ella and Aunt Lucy crochet dreams  
into a pink and purple afghan

Nurse Nedra  
pops Gelusil  
hoping to ease the ulcer  
that burns  
because she cares too much