



5-1-2019

Health Care

Dick Bentley
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>



Part of the [Fiction Commons](#), [Nonfiction Commons](#), [Photography Commons](#), and the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Bentley, Dick (2019) "Health Care," *Westview*. Vol. 35 : Iss. 1 , Article 15.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol35/iss1/15>

This Fiction is brought to you for free and open access
by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been
accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized
administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more
information, please contact
phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.

Health Care

By Dick Bentley

On this hill, in this clump of trees at the edge of the golf course, I sit with the wind swaying the daisies. Now distant, Bernardini's milky eyes are focused on the golf ball as he bends down before putting. He studies the ground. He analyzes the lie, the turf, the wind. Bernardini is the President of the Health Group that has denied me treatment. The treatment is too experimental for my tumor, the bean counters said. So I am to die. And so is Bernardini. The sun oozes across the sky; the breezes undulate over my skin like warm bandages. My heart beats with the systole and diastole of waves against a breakwater, and boredom creeps over me like vines. I know what I want: an event, by which I mean a squeeze of the trigger of the weapon now aimed at Bernardini's distant heart, as he kneels over his tiny white ball on the eleventh hole. His golfing partners, more health care executive pension plan investors, insurance dealers. A little acidic gossip. A little high-tech megadeath, a sharp thing that will wake them up. Then run a street sweeper over the eleventh green, turn the breeze up to hurricane so the daisies' heads tear off and hurtle through the air like bullets. A melon-burst, the tomato-colored splatter, Bernardini raises his arms as he kneels as if sniffing the air. His wings are spread for flight. He's howling like a siren, and he finally has everyone's full attention, before he rolls over like a noon pigeon.

Everyone gets a turn, and now it's mine. But some get more turns than others, and I've never had a turn, not one. You think I didn't hate their pity, their forced kindness. They are pointing now toward this clump of trees. I could have a few more of them by the time they sentence me to death.

I'll already be dead. You can wipe your feet on me, twist my motives around all you like, dump stones on my head, and drown me in the river. What we want, of course, is nothing more than the same old story: the trees pushing out their leaves and shucking them off, the unfurling of slugs, the worms vacuuming the dirt, the daisies and their pungent slow explosions. We want it all to go on and on again, the same thing each year, monotonous and amazing.

