

Night Nurse

By Michael Earl Craig

This night nurse is different.
She walks into my room and does not turn the light on.
She thinks I am sleeping.
I have just barely opened my left eye,
am looking through the slightest slit,
as moonlight exposes the room
for what it really is — a collection
of surfaces; lines and planes, mostly.
The night nurse puts a foot up on the radiator
and braces her clipboard on her knee
as she appears to take down a few notes.
I imagine she is working on a sonnet,
and that her ankle looks like polished walnut.
You imagine she is working on a crossword,
and that her feet are killing her.
The slightest slit is like an old gate
at a Japanese tea garden at night,
in the rain, that is supposed to be closed,
that is supposed to be locked.
“Someone has locked up poorly,” you’d say.
“Incorrectly.” But no one has asked you.

Source: *Poetry* (April 2014)