

The Feathered Watercolor
Author - Maria Claire Wenzel

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Mom, it has been exactly
7 months,
4 days
and 3 seasons
since you left.

But you are still here.

The doctor delivers
the diagnosis.
The words are
blunt-force trauma
to my brain:
DeMeNtiA

Nurse Francis
empties the pills
from the tidy box
into the palm of your
pleading hand.

The air vent taunts
its bogus chorus
and chatter.
You hesitate,

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yet you know.

You ask:

"Are the voices real?"

"Are you sure?"

"Why am I here?"

I lie the therapeutic lie;
the lie that contests
the diminishment
of a beautiful mind,
betraying itself.

And your watercolor portrait
drapes like a curtain
on the wall under which
we sat for hours,
sipping our coffee and wine;
your granddaughter curled up
in your motherly arms.

Byline of Maria Claire Wenzel

Prior to pursuing her love of writing and poetry, Maria Claire Wenzel, MSHCA, spent most of her career as a healthcare administrator developing patient assistance programs for individuals with chronic conditions. "The Feathered Watercolor", was written for and inspired by her beloved mother, who suffers from dementia. When Maria isn't pondering the million ways to split a vowel, she is feeding her chickens with her husband and daughter on their farm in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

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