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## Word Flight

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I woke to hear the murmurings of a new language:  
*'brainstem compromise, cerebromedullary disconnection,  
de-efferented state...'*

The soft, coiling marrow-substance of my pristine,  
tree-lined landscape  
was inundated and turned to slosh, like plains after the  
flood's passed through—

speech swept away by torrent, vocal cords divorced from  
breath,  
expression marooned, and I am now a strange and silent  
island—  
devoid, of movement and of gesture, no matter how I  
muster will  
to lift a hand in acquiescence, signal 'stop', or raise a  
lip-corner of smile.

Monotony weighs in, a daily groan of repetitive successions:  
Nurses flit. Fluids enter and exit via tubes. Medical students  
loom,  
dangling stethoscopes like rattles. At night—lights out,  
lights on,  
clang and roll, beep and blip, fractured sleep.

I'm locked in, looking out, tracking the movements of others  
who are teaching me to employ eyelid-flutter as speech,  
but I haven't achieved competence with the new Morse;  
lid movements are effort-laden, unreliable, and my code,  
          indecipherable, so

I can't tell them I'm leaving, that I'll employ the words  
          crowding my head like gulls around a shoal of fish,  
          aim their acuity at the slosh, dissect and redefine it—  
I'll fly out through the key-hole if I have to.

They assume I'm wallowing in my own rubbish-tip,  
but word by word, I'm gathering strength to soar.

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