

Waiting For Lunch

She sits transfixed, her wheelchair locked,
picks at raw scabs, patched inner tubes,
on her deflated limbs, uneven
nails breaching translucent flesh.

Disoriented, she'll mistake
a knotted shoelace for a snake,
a vine of leaves for a line
of ducks; across the room
flamingoes bathe—large potted
plants framing the lobby door.

Sunk in sleep, she grinds her teeth,
determined as a clumsy puppy
chasing its own tail—her twin
slits stitched like a cloth doll's eyes.

Once morning sun interrogates,
she will tell all: her latest fall,
new bruises an entire side;
cold foot, the raw pin cushion
that won't thaw; the worst
of curses for the nurses.

The far-off shouts approaching
fast, a bout of panic
sucks the life out of her lungs,
her ribcage shuttered.

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Steven Sher is a Brooklyn (NY)-born writer who made Oregon his home for close to 20 years; he now lives in Jerusalem (Israel). He is the author of 14 books including, most recently, *The House of Washing Hands* (Pecan Grove Press, 2014) and *Grazing on Stars: Selected Poems* (Presa Press, 2012). Steven has led many writing workshops and taught at various universities since the 1970s. Find out more about his work and/or contact him at stevensher.net.