

11:11

Marking time in the House  
of Death, I try to bypass  
the pain by whatever  
means available:  
the regimen of opioids  
the nurses give me;  
three times a day  
showers; and the many  
many downed shots  
of whiskey to dull the stuff  
that disgustingly stays stuck.

I try to count my blessings:  
a sugar fix, like the bluebirds  
get from their red-capped feeder  
outside my window. I imagine  
freedom in their flitting and  
flying. I both patiently and  
impatiently await my own flight  
called out in this curious version  
of a fourteen-seater airline  
terminal. I await the limitless  
sky. And while I myself won't  
know it, I earnestly look forward  
to the the all-consuming Fire  
subsequent to my leavetaking.

Joe L,  
Feb16/26