



Stop Watch

It's come to this, clouds of dust
 clotting beneath the bureau, growing
 on the bookcase, the books, I can't stop
 looking, eyes caught by the stain
 on the light green rug and no time
 to clean it up, running past, the dog's claws
 click the hardwood, trying to keep up
 as I race to the basement
 jam a load in the washer, he gazes
 at my face, *Why the rush?* he wonders

until you ring the bell
 and we sit with green tea.

You recite your latest chemo cocktail.
 The doctors plan to try Avastin with our friend.
 Your son said he loved you. Mine
 spun me around, pushed me towards the door
 when I crossed the border of his auditorium.
 He is practicing lines with a friend, has no time
 for a mother in a purple coat, a purple hat
 and orthopedic shoes. He
 is watching the clock.

Keeping Time

April, May, June, July, I turn
 the pages, August, he is gone,

camera, cap, photos, packed beneath his college bunk
 far beyond my sight,

dirty sock sweaty shirt boy smell
 fades, September, October,

the room is neat, a new
 coat of paint, his artwork framed

on the wall, I flip
 the weeks back to March,

paints, canvass, ink, slingshot strewn
 across his spread in a pile

Route One

This is worse than some big test.
 The right white shirt, fitted

so no one will notice
 how skinny he is, black

tie, black shoes spit-shined, the right
 flowers, red roses to match her dress

but will that mean too much. Too late.
 The florist is grinning. He must

pay her, must drive home to clean
 the car. Oh, no.

The hair.
 It's too long.

just about to topple, the front door
 flies open, sun glints
 the wires of his grin,
What's to eat? I'm
starved. Just a minute, I say, just
a minute.

Pity Party

How can you stand my constant whine,
 a mosquito fizzing your ear,

persistent pest, while a new cocktail of chemo
 courses your veins, sapping your drive

forward into life, the cold spring wind
 chilling your will to push past

waves of nausea that come unbidden
 at the least convenient moments. How

can you listen, week after week, as poison
 seeps through your veins, to my high-pitched

sizzle over and over. How can you resist
 the quick wish

to reach out fast
 and slap it.

Please recycle to a friend.

ORIGAMIPOEMS.COM
 or email:
 origamipoems@gmail.com

Origami Poems Project

KEEPING TIME
 by Julie Hassett © 2010