

The Butterfly, 25 Gauge

Raquel Cohen

Through the hospital window, daybreak brought the serene renewal of day,
but inside this patient there was a pervading hurricane.
Tormenting emotions whirled and anxiety rained
In the eight-year-old boy petrified of needles.
I was tasked with drawing his blood,
which flooded faster, frantically through his river of nerves.
He asked if he could sit on his mother's lap.
And if his father could hold his hands.
He asked to see the dreaded needle that would puncture his vein
A pediatric needle, a butterfly, 25 gauge.
I told him he was brave.
"Our nerves are sticky webs that trap us,
But through these self-imposed barriers we must emerge."
And in that moment, there was a change.
His eyes went from crying to courageous,
Ready to take flight straight into his fear
As the needle went straight into his vein.
He sailed past his river of nerves
And soared into a new valiant state of mind.