

At the Cancer Clinic

by Ted Kooser

She is being helped toward the open door
that leads to the examining rooms
by two young women I take to be her sisters.
Each bends to the weight of an arm
and steps with the straight, tough bearing
of courage. At what must seem to be
a great distance, a nurse holds the door,
smiling and calling encouragement.
How patient she is in the crisp white sails
of her clothes. The sick woman
peers from under her funny knit cap
to watch each foot swing scuffing forward
and take its turn under her weight.
There is no restlessness or impatience
or anger anywhere in sight. Grace
fills the clean mold of this moment
and all the shuffling magazines grow still.

DRA Comment: *Ted Kooser won a Pulitzer Prize for his poetry and was a former U.S Poet Laureate. His simple but elegant verse reflects his Midwestern roots (he is from Nebraska), where is a former professor at the University of Nebraska. The last line of this poem creates a lasting image.*