

Seasons of Sickness

*Pill bottles line the cabinet that was once filled with treats
Next to the keys for your scooter which hang unused
Because work requires too much energy now
The energy you desperately suck from the new diet fads*

*You don't take up as much room as you used to
Clothes swallow you like leaves on the autumn trees,
And your arms, branches of bone that threaten to snap
I don't know if we'll make it to winter*

*They say lightning never strikes the same place twice
I guess you were unlucky or that no faith can be put in old sayings
We hold onto the hope that you've beat this before
But it fades every time you visit the doctors*

*They tell us it's come back more aggressive
Well we'll fight harder
They tell us you're not fit enough to travel
We'll still book the flights*

*They tell us you've got weeks to live
And we're losing faith
They tell us
Everything we don't want to hear*

*What do you do with time when it's limited?
And what is praying for the best when you don't even know what the best is?
Questions flood our minds in amongst a turmoil of dread
I can't even begin to imagine what you think about*

*Your head must have been off in far places
Because you packed your bags
And with your wife's management to guide you
Headed overseas*

*For one glorious moment you were the well-practiced traveller
And then the next
Your cancer had chased you overseas
Closed your eyes on the wonders of the world*

It was time for you to come home

*We gathered a parade
Lifting prayers to the sky for your journey back
Familiar faces filled your living room with one crucial one missing
Only to be seen in photos and dreams now*

*We use small talk to fill the void between us and you
Phones set to loud and minds alert
We thought we'd have more time and now I look at the clock
And beg the hands to stop and wait for us to catch up*

But cancer waits for no-one

*As you landed you took your last breath
The message was sent out like dominoes
We met at the plane and my brother rushed to your side
While I cradled the only woman that brought out the youth in you*

*With a Karakia
We farewelled your body that no longer had pain
And with a longing for your presence to return
We welcomed your spirit home*