

## the patient line

a hospital cannot  
confirm or deny  
if a patient ————— a sister  
is in the psych ward ————— breathing

unless she has  
cried out — written your name  
on a list

if we find your name ————— sorrow  
you will be given  
more of her — a phone number  
with a secret code  
for the patient line ————— exoneration

let it ring ————— hope  
for a really long time

we took her cane ————— weapon  
& tried to give her a walker ————— future  
but she refused it  
so it could take her  
never ————— many minutes to make it  
to the phone ————— to you

endless ————— we'll let her crawl  
————— industrial carpet  
in hospital socks  
longing for connection ————— death

let the ringing ————— grief  
go on & on & on  
in case she picks up