

remarkable level of continuity of care. They provided regular, about fortnightly, follow-up over the 3 years, and only 19 out of more than 300 patients (6%) were lost to care. They achieved this despite the functional split and the endless Maoist reorganisations that were imposed on their services. The flame still flickers.

- 1 Marshall M. London's mental health services in crisis. *BMJ* 1997; **314**: 216.
- 2 Burns T/Baggaley M. Splitting in-patient and out-patient responsibility does not improve patient care. *Br J Psychiatry* 2017; **210**: 6–9.

- 3 Burns, T, Yeeles, K, Koshiaris C, Vazquez-Montes M, Molodynski A, Puntis S, et al. Effect of increased compulsion on readmission to hospital or disengagement from community services for patients with psychosis: follow-up of a cohort from the OCTET trial. *Lancet Psychiatry* 2015, **2**: 881–90.

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doi: 10.1192/bjp.210.3.232a

poems
by
doctors

Restraint

Cate Bailey

In the event of amnesia the body remembers
those nights, the taste of them,
clotted bloody in your mouth.
For your own good now, we hold you down.

It takes a five-nurse embrace,
each limb pinned.
I wince at the fat slap of your cheek against the mattress.

I am your father, mother, brother.
Captor, lover,
all in one.
The repetition doesn't escape me,
though my hands are tied.

This could be a closet, a cell, a bedroom,
any four small walls to punch against.
Like the half-dreamt wordless childhood hours;
your plum-eyed mother crumpled on the sofa,
your brother stoned.
You cowered in the broom cupboard,
the lank strands of the mop flopping against your face.
Bleach shrill in your nostrils,
the needle-cold pail cutting into your ribs.
Your father's ale-stained voice always in your ear.

And yet we strip you,
wrench your pants down.
Apply pressure,
restraint to your writhing body,
silence its howling slurs;
all verb and no noun.

We draw up the syringe
and in a strange reflex arc,
you rise to meet the sharp.
Bruised flesh yearning for the exquisite sting,
the neat metallic completeness;
the briefest articulation of grief.

Selected by Femi Oyeboode. From *The Hippocrates Prize 2015: The Winning and Commended Poems*, selected by T Dalrymple, R Gross, F Oyeboode and S Rae, eds MW Hulse & DRJ Singer. The Hippocrates Press, 2015. © Cate Bailey. Reprinted with permission.

The British Journal of Psychiatry (2017)
210, 233. doi: 10.1192/bjp.bp.116.181768