

other doctors are. After giving Tom a neurological examination he says that he knows the type of treatment Tom needs. Next month, he's going to a brain tumour conference in the U.S. When he comes back, he'll have a treatment to offer Tom. Please call him in a month.

A month later, I call. He has only a vague recollection of our conversation. "I'm not sure what you know about this tumour," he says, "but there's not much that can be done." I don't understand. I clearly remember

our discussion and his hopeful words. He asked me to bring Tom to London to see him with the understanding that he could help him. He received us in a humane and compassionate way. And now this complete disavowal. I'm totally disheartened.

And then it comes to me. Tom has a very rare tumour, one that is not well understood. By examining Tom, this doctor is able to further his medical knowledge. Is he doing a study and needing more participants, I wonder? He knows there's no possi-

ble treatment he can offer Tom. He has enticed us to London with a false promise. I feel cheated and angry. And this is just the beginning of our desperate journey.

Karen Fejer is a personal historian. Previously, she was a freelance contributor to CBC Radio. She has written for Women's Quarterly, Ontario Medical Journal, Canadian Jewish News, and other publications.



Diane Driedger, "Self-Portrait with Skeleton (After Frida Kahlo's Self-Portrait with Parrot)," 2011, watercolour, 12 in. x 16 in.

DIANE DRIEDGER

Cyborg

PICC line apparatus
removed
from my heart
can't leave it behind
it's part of me
like Seven of Nine
in Star Trek Voyager

I ask the nurse
can I have it?
you never know when it will come
in handy when making art

at home I look at the tubing
is this like artmaking with
nail clippings
or my hair?

Diane Driedger's poetry appears earlier in this volume.