

## **Crapshoot**

*for Bill Ainsworth*

Buttoned into his white pharmacy coat  
he didn't notice the switch broom  
in the corner by the back door  
ready to sweep his brain under the knife  
retire him like a spent racehorse

He wears a baseball cap at breakfast  
not to shock friends, his scalp  
a desert of scars, dry rivulets  
sagebrush tufts of hair  
same twinkle eyes under the brim.

After omelets and a mountain of pills  
he grips the table edge. We watch him  
shuffle the hardwood abyss  
determined to stay upright  
every step a roll of the dice.

Riding a hot streak  
he pours a second cup of coffee  
not asking his wife for help  
too aware of the long odds  
in this crapshoot.

*©2017 Candelin Wahl*