

In Hospital

So now I'm in.
For how long?
Now is forever.

The Rx. the Dr. gave me to sleep
fails to count a high enough number
black sheep.

O to speak
to someone, no holds barred.
My thin legs moving swiftly, I want to circle this hospital

a very bright runner.
And at night
a moon slowly, look in the windows each containing its own misery

its own radium.
Hoo-hab &
flim-flam.

The rabbit of death maybe
is my eternal mate.
Sodomy.



I want to do things
I don't want,
like stealing all the hair-coloring products from the drugstore.

I point—for a piece of paper to write on,
to pierce their hearts.
But the night-nurse is an old pug.

O menagerie of night-women
pipe down.
Every Sunday they wheel me into the church-room.

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What do they want from me?
To go down
on my marrow-bones?

Let me be
free
to roam the aisles of the Variety Store across the way

to run my hands over towels of many colors.
I'll read again the story
of *Peep-Sight*, the Gambel's Quail.

At least I'll escape to the linen-room.
I'll escape to the hospital kitchen,
all that food stored in institutional bins. Onions, lima beans.

I'll read by light of a burner,
by the hidden knives, mixed in with surgical knives washed clean

of blood of the lamb
Amen.

from "The Clinic" in *Nightmare Of Mouse*. © Lynn Strongin 1977, 2002.
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