

1990

Hospital Trip

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Hospital Trip

I hugged the sterile paper robe
so unlike her usual
tacky, flower-print smocks.
she smelled
like disinfectant,
medication,
freshly-bathed skin.
I tried to smile
as I looked at her watery eyes
and held her frail bony hand
She had become a memory,
eating colorless, tasteless food,
spending hours staring
at pea-green walls and Woman's Magazine,
lying down to sleep
in her stiff white coffin.
Her kiss felt like parchment paper
and my 11-year-old mind
hid from her fear
and dressed her
in orange, yellow, and red dresses,
and made her smell like
clean sheets, lavender perfume, and frying bacon.

Emily Wismer