



# Symbiosis

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Writing is, for many of us, a way to process what we experience, both our medical careers and other aspects of our lives. Sometimes we are bearing witness, sometimes we are in the thick of it. While we were preparing for a local reading of our work, Dr Zinkand and I were sharing our poetry, and discovered that we had each written a poem in response to the death of a beloved colleague several years previously. Upon further discussion, we realized we'd written these poems nearly simultaneously. Each poem has its own viewpoint, each can stand alone, but they are, we believe, symbiotic, and so we choose to publish them together.

## Out of Office

May 29, 2013

*Out of Office:*

*Thank you for your email.*

*I am out of the office and  
will not return until further notice.*

*Regards,*

*Susan Lee*

Months go by

She's in the hospital

Out again

In again

Home again

Reports are few:

The news isn't ever good

November 6, 2013

She's gone

We all mourn

November 8, 2013

I peruse

the clinician directory

Lee, Anna

Lee, Susan

Lee, YaLi

Her name continues in the list.

November 12, 2013

I again look,

this time for Dr YaLi Lee.

Susan's name has disappeared.

## Susan, November 7

I wake

with an awareness of grief

momentarily unattached--

Stillness surrounds me,

weighs down,

drowns me.

She was with me in my dream.

Can I return to sleep

before the darkness claims her,

names her death?

Autumn dawns slowly

sends rays of light

across the bedroom ceiling.

A single bird

tentatively greets the day

in song

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