

Dad's Vigil

What can I say to convince you
sitting at the hospital every day
is where I need to be

I know through all these weeks
your mother is often barely
aware of me there

I know you worry I'm wearing down
how city driving tires me now
how little time I take for myself

I know you fear for my heart
since that day in Emergency
one floor below

What can I say to convince you
her respirator breathes not just for her
the monitors trace not only her life-signs

What can I say to convince you
my memory is talking to her
my peace is our hands entwined

my heart is her heart

Ellen B. Ryan 2008

In K. M. Banchoff (Ed.) (2008), **This little light of mine: Poetry and stories from family caregivers** (p. 34). Writing Down Our Years, No. 9. Hamilton ON: McMaster Centre for Gerontological Studies.