

Lithium Balloons

Balloons,
the size of my pinkie nail,
expand when mixed with water and stomach acid
and are less than lite yogurt,
sagging like loose socks around my ankles
by that touch of large curd cottage cheese with no peach,
but twenty pound weights.
No matter how hard I try to keep them up in place,
my socks flip and flop
off the end of my toes and skipping becomes impossible
for fear I'd fly so high that I won't be able to find my way home
from outer space.
From all these years of trying to find some sunshine,
I know that these balloons are just as good
as the ones filled with helium—
and neither one is Heaven.

My doped-up, happy-bouncy head rests
in Alice's Wonderland of Zoloft dreams about white rabbits
...makes me late in motion...
for anything other than barefoot in the kitchen.
But when I've inhaled that helium and someone strikes that sulfur tip,
I lose my footing and slip
up to inspiration by the hour with little sleep
and that brilliant mind which speaks in Spanish
tells me that I should really give the worm a go—
no lemon or lime or salt needed with the good shit;
all I need's a lick of skin and

a cushion to take a nap
with a cigarette dangling from my lips like a boulder on the edge of
a cliff that would soon fall
down with Wile E. Coyote while singing about a ring around a
posy and pockets full of woes-ies
until it pounds on my head like a hammer and a nail does—
tap-up, tap-tap-up, tap-up....clunk.

I'm buried in this medicated marriage of who I am and what we need
only because I want to be a good mother.

So, lithium balloons keep the Hatter at her Un-birthday Party
locked in one seat only
and half a cup of cold tea.

—Rachel L. Eblin-Dodds