Palliative and Supportive Care

cambridge.org/pax

Expressive Aphasia

David Haosen Xiang, B.A.

Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA, USA

Poetry

Cite this article: Xiang DH (2024) Expressive Aphasia. *Palliative and Supportive Care* **22**(6), 2246. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1478951524001093

Received: 22 May 2024
Accepted: 23 May 2024

Email: dxiang@hms.harvard.edu

The flowers are numbered
in pictures you no longer remember.

I'm glad you're doing well.

Other messages emerge and you sit
by her breath in the dark. Waiting,
your voice becomes
quiet when the shades rise.

I'm sorry, I'm really not.

You worry this will last generations.
That each day, the world is being made
of less and less.

No pain? Great to hear.

Someone with a stethoscope pokes
and prods your body. She talks without
looking. You ask if anyone is available
to pour the morning coffee.

Please help. I need help.

Some days a young man sits with you.
Opens the juice cartons and unscrews
stuck-on plastic caps.
Speaks in fewer words than you.

You remind me of my son. I miss him.

When the room is empty you begin
to cry. Let the tears roll off your gown.
Air moves in and rests. As if
you have found a home.

Don't leave me. Don't leave.

© The Author(s), 2024. Published by Cambridge University Press. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.