

## SINGING IN BED

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*Catherine Stearns*

Desperate, he'd had the nurses

Hang fishing line from the ceiling  
To secure his music stand.  
Once a womanizing trumpeter, now  
An old man singing alone in bed.

He learned to turn the pages  
With his tongue. He learned  
To raise the strings of his arms,  
Await someone else's delicate touch.

The last time I heard him,  
His A and my A sharp—  
Incapable of merging—nonetheless  
Created a raucous sound:

Not a father's sonorities,  
Nor yet the confetti of a harp,  
Just a song sung

To break the silence.