



## I Can't Go Back

I Can't Go Back

50

Laura E. Garrard, MS

Riffling unfiled records and bills  
Somewhat organized in a warped box  
I find photos never framed  
From a family cruise in 2017,  
Examine my unconcerned face –  
Posing for cheesy pictures in  
Baltic sea ports and evening gowns  
Worn once upon a star.  
If I could have warned her

This would be the last time  
She swing-danced in 3-inch heels with Dad,  
Enjoyed white wine with dinner,  
Worked out on an elliptical without pain,  
Would I tell her, in three years this body  
Will betray your assumption,  
Take away frivolity, fervent physicality  
To hike, run, do yoga, jump,  
Freedom to live every day  
Without medication  
And fear of an earlier death?

Would I have been grateful  
If I had known what I would face  
Or suffer longer than I have?

When I look into the mirror  
Tomorrow morning,  
I will warn her of what  
She may not know, tell her  
Enjoy your plum skin,  
Beats, breaths, small pains.  
Today's rise to set  
May be the worst or best,  
Relish your health  
As it is.

© 2024 Laura E. Garrard

Laura E. Garrard is a multiple myeloma thriver and published author living in the Northwest. Her poetry and prose have appeared in journals like *The Madrona Project*, *Amethyst*, *Silver Birch*, *TulipTree Review*, and others.

12/7/24



© 2024 Laura E. Garrard

---

OncoLink is designed for educational purposes only and is not engaged in rendering medical advice or professional services. The information provided through OncoLink should not be used for diagnosing or treating a health problem or a disease. It is not a substitute for professional care. If you have or suspect you may have a health problem or have questions or concerns about the medication that you have been prescribed, you should consult your health care provider.