

The Day Her Speech Was Slurred

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CATHRYN COFELL

## The Day Her Speech Was Slurred

An emergency room doctor scheduled a CAT scan  
and then an MRI  
and then she was admitted  
and then she swallowed steroids  
and then a patch of scalp was shaved  
and then they carved that pumpkin patch  
and then they scooped the rotten pulp  
and then they stitched the lid back on  
and then speech became church  
and then green eyes gray confession  
and then she unraveled  
and then they opened her skull again  
and then they siphoned the burning fuel out  
and then they stitched again a temporary hem  
and then her step was Frankenstein  
and then her left eye moved to Hayward  
and then they opened her skull again  
and then they stopped the riot with a fire hose  
and then her brain became Chernobyl  
and then her insides out  
and then she slept  
and then her insides out  
and then we lit her up like a drive-in theater  
and then she performed a one-act play in four acts  
and then she undressed into a red giant  
and then talk became Morse code  
and then she cradled me like a baby  
and then I washed her like fine china  
and then I held her like a baby  
and then the speak of Quakers  
and then the rain on her quilted body  
and then the drought