

This Is How Far It Is

by Paul de Denus

Come on in!!!

The house reeks. The rainwater that flooded his living room carpet a week ago has left a lingering stink.

Can you take me to the hospital?

Are you okay?

I haven't been able to pee for a while and I have a sharp pain in my kidney.

Can you walk?

Oh sure. My night bag is there on the table so just bring your car around, as close to the door as you can.

How long has this been going on? the admitting nurse asks.

Oh, three days or so.

Any drugs?

No.

Any alcohol?

Plenty.

How much?

Oh, six a day.

And you can't urinate?

Dribbles a bit. This morning I wet the bed.

Anything else?

I have a neurological condition, a form of MS. My hands and feet don't work too well.

The emergency observation room is spacious. Private. There's only one gurney and he's all hooked up in its bedding. A colostomy bag hangs to the side. There's blood in the urine.

What did they say?

It's the old prostate. I've had symptoms in the past but they went away.

Are they keeping you? Overnight?

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Nope. I have an appointment with the urologist next week.

He looks at a fat bag of urine on the counter.

That's what they took out of me. The blood's normal. They didn't put it in right the first time.

He stares off through the partially open curtains.

This is a game changer you know.

I know.

