



POETRY | FALL 2022

An EKG on life

By Anita Kottapalli

regular rate
and rhythm
we live on a normal
axis, status quo,

intervals routine
schedules regular
how we like them,
comfort and
morning caffeine,

our minds at
times uncertain,
irregularly
irregular fibrillations
racing thoughts of

who we are,
where we will be in
future beats

times when things
move too slow,
rate below
sixty

minutes in an hour
feels too long,
is this okay or
do we speed it up
to feel less of the day?

or unexpected
dropped beats of
the heart
break, blocks, and betray
how could we see

this coming our way?

and the depressions,
segments
of our lives,
sloped troughs,
alarms of injury that
no one can see

we come out
with downward
deflections -
reflections of
what we can survive -

and with these
small waves we are
happy to be
free of pain -

we are learning
how to be alive

Anita Kottapalli is a fourth-year medical student at the University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences. She received her B.S. at Cornell University. She is passionate about combining her love for poetry with themes in medicine and is published in *Marginalia: Cornell Undergraduate Poetry Review*, *Imposter Lit* poetry journal, and the *Lumen: A medical humanities magazine* from the University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences.

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