**Thursday Memo – April 26, 2018**

*In my role as a patient representative for the Medical Center, I am witness to some of the most highly charged, emotional, intense experiences that our patients and their families must face. Responding to the invitation to enter their lives, to hold up their stories and their voices—this is my work. Problem-solving, mediating, supporting, restoring trust—this too is the work I do with my care-giving colleagues. The way I see it, we are all, every one of us, in this together. It is this deep and fleeting intimacy that binds us.*

**In Labor and Delivery** – by Emily Ferrara

As the evening sky deepens to indigo,

I sit beside a woman I’ve just met.

My left arm lightly circles her gowned shoulder.

She loses herself in a crescendoing lullaby

of loss: She is shaking, heaving, keening.

The arc of her sorrow is sacred,

encompassing all sorrow. I ride the wave of grief,

land upon the shore of her chanting:

*Okay, Okay, Okay, Okay, Okay*—she calms herself,

calms me. I wipe her tears, let mine well up.

Evening deepens to a deeper blue.

**In the PICU**
This is a story told by the geography
of an infant: tender skin and fontanel,
bluest eyes, fractured skull, whole-hearted
hunger, broken shin, milky breath,
brain bleed. What fairytale her parents
tell of uninflicted harm, a fall from grace,
the couch, last week! Is it the terrain
of her anomalies that defy her
mother’s bond, her father’s pride?
Who will have the fortitude to love her
guileless smile, her chaste misshapen face?
Rouse the sleeping angels to their charge!