

10,000 steps at Guadalcanal

My grandfather injecting morphine in people he knew and did not.
Their limbs — doll parts, still breathing. Most to die, and when
you are not a nurse, just an injector, the needle will stay with you long after.

A walk in San Francisco, not the tourist parts. Our steps same-d
towards the stars and traffic lights. Josh Joplin in my mind. Towards pacing, an imagine.
Never is my hand the needle in your arm. Or even fingers in my fingers. Or children.

Your step and mine. I practice this pantomime in my head.
We cross between our breath and 4,000. The monument of nothing to say.
Elephants walking the same direction, substantial but apart.

I know you are beautiful even though my feet are hurting like new teeth.
And I have lost my way to feel your thought.

My grandfather did noble things back in the war of simple killing,
relieving those who could not brace against their dying.

20,000 steps and I have walked a new human.
Away from what was left behind.