

On Hold, I Think About the Shape of Words

The O of mouthing *co-pay* and the tutting of *deductible*. The edges on a language cut to only what is covered. The years spent twisting lips within that. The years spent saying *I'm fine* around friends, not pointing out each backwards slide. How future's not a synonym for progress, more time is not a plan. On hold, I skim an article predicting new austerity, new talk of necessary cuts. On hold, I plan on omitting that I'm rationing my pills again: that I can't live outside of deficit or bracing for its start. On hold, I wish wait music read the names of who'd hung up: who had to work, make dinner, be in anything but limbo. You'd know who you outlasted, might be proud of that tenacity.