POETRY AND MEDICINE

No Matter How Far Away
You Are You Can’t Not Want
to Live Here

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Sign on a realty office

I can’t not want to explain how you will
drift from Wednesday afternoon bridge club—
chocolate-covered raisins in silver-rimmed teacups
on the north and south corners of the table,
gumdrops on the east and west.
That time Helen opened with 4 hearts.
Your counter: I’d be happy with one brain.

I can’t tell you how much I don’t want to explain
why you must leave your home—
books, long-empty vases, and music everywhere.
Chopin’s Nocturnes lay open but silent
since those rainy May afternoons with Ava—
the blue vase on the piano overflowing with white lilacs.
Fingers are most sensitive when touching the black keys.

We will find a place where you can’t not want to live.
New bridge partners every day.
A place where contract, ruff, and bid can
not lose their dark-chocolate meaning
no matter how far away you might be.
But first tell me again about the trick
you took with the 2 of clubs.
Pride sustains us as much as love.

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