

## **A Need to Breathe**

**By Patricia Urban Korsak**

Don't go, he said  
I'll be too anxious while you're in the air, he said  
I'm anxious about it now, he said.  
Then he broke down and cried.  
Making me second-guess myself.

I drove him to the hospital  
Where he stayed for 3 days.  
Not long enough.

Come get me, he said.  
I don't belong here, he said.  
I'm not like these people, he said.  
Then he lied  
Saying that he wasn't depressed,  
Nor was he an alcoholic.

He convinced them  
That he didn't belong there.  
He called me to pick him up.  
He raced out the door, saying he  
Had to leave before the doctor stopped him.  
Again, I questioned myself.

Was it me?  
Was it him?  
Was it his parents?  
Was it the demands of society?

Don't go, he said.  
I have to, I said.  
I need to, I said.  
What will I do without you?  
You will cope.

And I went.  
I flew over the ocean  
To the lands of my ancestors.  
I explored. I climbed. I wrote.  
I photographed. I learned.  
I smiled. I laughed. I relaxed.  
I breathed.