Wokiksuye

By Allison Adelle Hedge Coke

—in borrowed language in honor and memory of Bill Ice

Like a horse’s tail
so thick, black
down past his waist
beautiful. Wanyaka.
Chemotherapy—
white man’s
man-made cancer . . .
doesn’t distinguish
between good or bad
cells . . . just kills.
The spirit is connected
to the hair at the
crown—pahin hocoka.
The hair falls
the spirit goes,
the will is
connected no more.
Leukemia—
cancer of the
White
Blood Cell.
Lakota wicasa
Oglala wica
Ha Luta Oyate wicozani sni
Kuja, unsika
Canku Wakan o mani
ma wanagi o mani
wasigla
ceya
wokiksuye
wokiksuye
wopilamaye
miksuya
Canku Luta o mani
Canku Waste o mani
wohitika
iyomakpi, iyomakpi
ake—anpetu
anpetu waste
I knew him well.