

Who said? Hillary Mullan

Who said that blue was the color of sterility?
Was it an interior designer?
Who first wrapped the operating room
In a single shade of pantone #2184?
Because, I think,
Whoever said this
Had never been to a summer birthday party
Kool-aid tongues and
Sticky fingers of June's
Blue Raspberry Italian ice

Whoever said that misty gray was the color of scrubs
Steamed, pressed and folded
Into mechanically efficient packets
Had not realized the worn
And once blue welcome mat
Already gowned itself
in this lazy shade

And who said that white was the color of convalescence?
Of sheets and starched coats
Sickness and waiting. . .
I wonder.
For this was once the color of Christianity
Clarity, bright snow
and beginnings

Upon entering the hospital
I pulled back thick curtains
To discover an inverted rainbow
In the arc of fluid-filled lines
Draped from IV poles
to slender
Pale
Wrists.