Communication 101

BY MARILYN ASCHOFF MELLOR, MD

August, a sauna

and

the lure of a pool too much

for the preschool girl

floating

face down when found

frantic bystander breaths

before her eyes spark

her ebony skin rescue-charged

but in the ER

no response to simple questions

her gaze drifting

my worry rising  

(neurons undone?)

until

her mother sweeps

in

nun-like garments

and simple hijab,
torrents of words

foreign

to me

the girl’s face washed

in understanding,
her answers  

and my spirit

flowing

open spillways.

Marilyn Aschoff Mellor is a retired pediatric emergency room physician.