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Transplant Surgery

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Another universe stands behind the door as we wait between the worlds in a back hallway. We cannot be accused of asking for what is not ours if we are not in the room. There is a pause just long enough to talk about Halloween costumes and what my necklace says, the weather and weekend plans. We cannot be accused of taking what is not ours if we are not in the room.

Then we enter, and those behind the curtain know how to breathe for a dead man. I hold his aorta as it pulses out final heartbeats. Soon other stories take over: four people used to being in charge. Thoracic wants a longer pulmonary vein and the results of blood gasses that never got sent. He crowds the table with three others, all trying to reach into the same space and take what they want.

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The petty arguments that arise in these sorts of situations behind a surprising optimism for human potential – we are like the bodies that house us. Even when fragmented, we can be kept together just long enough to fall apart correctly. To live on, in pieces, elsewhere.