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Hernia

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Hernia // Rachel Bevels

On New Year's Eve,
you had chest pains
You had stopped laughing
at my jokes an hour before
so I knew you were sick
or sad. Your face was paper
as we circled around your
limp limbs on the couch
You grabbed your heart
Mom grabbed her keys
and She grabbed your hand
I reached for something
to grab onto. Between
teenager and adult, I was
ignored at the party and
gladly went with you. Sat
in the waiting room with her
trying not to laugh at her
pointing out the nurse's hair
standing a foot off her head in
the jaws of an oversized clip
Each waiting on you and
wondering which of us you
were waiting on, but playing
friends. Mom came and
I went down narrow halls
constricting like veins
contracting like
my gagging
stomach at

the smell
You said little, so we
watched the Big Bang Theory
And I tried not to look at
the needle in your arm, that
tear in the fold of your skin
much smaller than the
opening in your throat
that didn't know
what to let in and
what to keep out and
when to stay put and I
couldn't stay put because
She had to come and I
had to go back up the halls
where I didn't belong,
pushed out the hernia of your
heart and into the sights
of the nurse whose waving
hair wall was less funny
alone, until the silence
got so loud I couldn't
take it and rode back to
watch the ball drop with a
room full of strangers