A Heart Beating Hard

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2. MARGIE


Margie started there in that small empty place and there single-celled Margie started to divide and divide and divide. Unseen, unknown Margie, what was Margie before she was Margie, burrowed and billowed and became. Swimming in the warm dark waters where we all live before we live, growing skin to contain, lungs to breathe, a heart to beat.

Margie, started, sprouting legs to kick and eyes to see and a mouth to speak.

Margie, at the start, small and secret and shaping into the shape we all take. Growing and pushing inside that space that becomes smaller and smaller with every new bone and ear and eyelash. Turning and floating and kicking inside all of that inside fluid. Fish-like, flapping, fat forming, warming. Filling with the blood that would be her blood, building the brain that would be her brain, finding the lines of the body that would be her body.

Margie, started inside, hiding.
Margie, from the start, her body made secret.
Margie, from the start, the same.
Margie, from the start, different from the rest of us.
Margie, starting, eyes opening, light let in, waiting for what would come.

3. MARJORIE

Tomorrow is coming. Or here, almost. Tomorrow is almost today and still Marjorie is not sure if she should call Steve at the Store and say that today she will take her vacation day.

Marjorie, in her soft purple pajamas, sits sunk down into the deep shape of Ma left behind in this bed. Marjorie, in Ma's bed, sits still as she can in the quiet, quiet bedroom, in the weak blue light at the beginning of morning. Shoulders down low, the hard of the headboard making pains in her back. Marjorie sits, has been sitting for a long time, listens to Gram roll and snore and sigh in the next room. Looks at the dark turned-off shape of the no-sound television. Listens to her self, her wind, to her own breath breathing the last of Ma in and out. Marjorie sits and smells the smell of Ma, the late-night secret cigarettes, the