

## After the Hysterectomy

i ripped out my stitched-in pain  
pump in a panic because i confused the side  
effects of relief for a warning sign. in the elevator six weeks later, my neighbor cornered me  
to chat about his gummy, teething, seven-month-old. two months in, when an unskippable  
Pampers ad strobed through the night of my bedroom, i turned off the TV. around  
twelve weeks, corey called to tell me the good news. a son. i shut every blind in the house.  
now, the most i can give someone is my love. there is a joy i will never feel.  
my body survived the overdose so nine years later i could be a death doula  
to the only other cavity strong enough to hold my heart. thank you,  
body. someone who tried to take their own life shouldn't be able to  
make more. pain and permanence were twins birthed to rot  
in my belly as they fled their umbilical nest inside to grow  
into its own hungry pink walls, swelling  
my uterus so much that four months  
before the surgery, i let the whole foods  
cashier believe i was five months pregnant.  
a doctor told me that my ovaries, still attached  
to my abdominal walls, would continue to release  
an egg every month which my body  
would absorb. god. nothing  
inside will survive me