

# This Will Hurt

by John Woodington

He is tubes

tethered to a totem  
of toxins and suction  
His mother weeps  
against the window  
already gushed with rain  
He cannot eat until  
his body realigns  
Already the ID bracelet  
slides freely  
from wrist to elbow

These are broken:  
five ribs, pelvis  
lung—collapsed  
spleen—ruptured, removed  
He tears up at the thought  
of ever driving again  
He says the medic held a needle  
said, “This will hurt,”  
and pierced his lung  
When I ask if it hurt  
he looks left  
and clicks the morphine button  
strung down over his chest

