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I Am a Doctor

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Nachoem Wijnberg

I AM A DOCTOR

I let rain devastate my clothes
and stay awake at night and then fall asleep
on the back seat of my car, on my horse.
When I find a dead body in the street
I look for letters and keys in the clothes
and try to find someone who recognizes the body
(sometimes it's the dog or the horse).

Look at me, I'm a doctor.
Give me your hand, I'm a doctor.
Let me through, I'm a doctor, no, a policeman.
No, a doctor and a policeman were walking down the street.

Here are two envelopes.
In the one there's a joke which is twice as good as in the other.
You may keep one of the two jokes.
Choose an envelope, open it, read the joke.
The joke in the other envelope is twice or half as good.
If I allow you to switch, would you?

What's it about, I asked those I found,
and they all told the same joke about themselves
and what's more they gave me lists of their traits
as if they wanted to be in a better one.
It's me, talk to me.

I'm a doctor, they called me to be sure.

I'm going to make a joke that will last ten years.
I have all the ingredients.

translated by Alissa Leigh