Murmur

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I've always had this hole inside my heart, it's literal, and every two years needs machines with cords taped onto me and plugged by nurses with their gelid hands. In truth it's never caused me trouble, or not much. I need my prophylaxis certain times, like anybody; don't much mind gray eyes of residents who promenade to see

(or, rather, hear) my fault when I'm laid out for show. I'm clinical; I'm teachable. They have to use their stethoscopes like men on subs use pings to find the enemy.

Have always been ventricular, septal, and defective to them. Which suits me fine. I like to know they squirm when asked to pin it down, and watch my small systolic/diastolic cycles misfire on television. Every time there's that suck and whistle, leading to the next, referring to the first, which speaks to the last. My own inefficiency. The exegesis white-coats try

and try to learn: my fast, off pulse. Heartstutter. Like murmured things old women said at cards when I was small: Good night, they said. Great day in the morning. And, Lord, Lord. Lord have mercy.