

Order of Operations

I do not want to know the force required to break

 a human bone, but
my oncologist persists
in telling me how opening a skull

is not the same as setting a forearm straight
again—inside my head a pressure



to nod as if I care how my brain
will be scrubbed clean. It is the same

nod I use when my lover spins a yarn after a good fix,

his mouth pulsing like the abdomen
of a caterpillar mid-metamorphosis.

If I could see my skull opened, skin stretched like wings—



No, no, no, she says, we will use a saw and forceps to remove the tumor.

There will be no forced breakage.

My lover is in another
person's apartment

 looking for a screw-
driver to open the refrigerator's back

 and suck out whatever poisons he can.



When I find him, he twists himself
on the floor like a melting wax figure.

He says *We are all flesh* into his flexed torso. And soon we
bend in and out of each other.

My oncologist makes a quick gesture
to the back of her head and says *There*.