

“Waiting Room”

I’ve befriended the other woman, a five-year fantasy spanning two romances.

What a loser, we say, *ha ha ha*, weeping. At the STI screening, a lump in my right breast. I imagine myself dead: a gathering, recallable details of a forgettable life, *and she always . . . ha ha ha*, true enough for eulogy. In the waiting room, five of us in papery purple robes. The other woman texts, *you should watch the new thriller where the girl disappears*. The protagonist reminds her of me, she says, and I’m startled by being perceived. Another poet I do not know has gotten engaged. *I am marrying the love of my life*, she tells 732 people online. Meanwhile, the iron pill is stuck in my throat. The flower delivery site was an elaborate scam. There is a scar on my hand from where I cut too quick through the butter in the power outage, not seeing it had already thawed. *I am marrying, I am loving, of my life of my life of my life*. *Ma’am? We’re ready for your ultrasound*. My purple robe has fallen open. No one looks up from their phones. What is a love. What is a life.