

Requiem

Category: Holding On

written by Quinten Clarke | February 10, 2019

I am fourteen. I am in a children's hospital waiting room to see a plastic surgeon. I am here because of a surgical scar on my abdomen that has caused pain while doing sit-ups. This has not prevented my father and me from making a requisite number of jokes about the type of plastic surgery I am to receive.

My parents and I move to an exam room. We sit in silence as we wait for the surgeon to arrive. He is late. The room offers little entertainment; it is generic, muted.

The door opens slowly; the surgeon enters. He is tired but trying to hide it. He is kind and young and new. I am old.

He is not the first surgeon I have seen, and he will not be the last.

We exchange pleasantries. He tells me that my pain is likely due to scar tissue. He can remove it and suture the area. He assures me that there will be no pain; this is a minor procedure.

I can't tell him that I wish to keep this scar; he would not understand. His job is to fix the unsightly. But this scar is more than one thing. This scar is my story. I do not wish to have that story hidden, sanitized. I earned this scar.

I tell the surgeon that "I'll think about it," but I've already made my decision. The pain is manageable, it does go away.

The scar remains.

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