“We’ll go in there and take out the criminals,” says her Dr. Cop. They must be saddling her thyroid.

At her drawing class, she sketched a nude model. A mark or two, what would be drawn on her skin.

She sketched a long and fluid unerring line, the thesis of the pose.

*Please, don’t slip up on my skin.*

And at night she snips the flesh acorns hanging from her earlobes and her navel. *I knew I wasn’t a tree.*

* What are the insides called?

Day before they take it out, she looks up what it is:

- gland, two lobes
- & an isthmus, wrapping around the wind.

No. Just below the voice box, around the windpipe.

The body’s names once landmasses and a shield.

* Surprises—

The surgical room the size of a walk-in closet
Small corner of the world
Incision
Body taken off
To wake attached
To a cherry pit
Kicked into rolling

Far away
The trees are soaked

They drip dry

People say they don’t see the scar. She tells them the news. “Oh, I see it now,” they say.

Hospital basement, doctor puts on gloves, opens a vault in the floor and hands her a pill she swallows. Six people wait outside for theirs. At home, after she reads To the Lighthouse she throws away the book because of her radioactive hands.

Letter to a patient: “This radionuclide has a half-life of 8 days.”

Cheryl Clark 2009