

## Catheterization

by [Marjorie Maddox](#) in the [June 17, 2020](#) issue

Start with the thin wisp  
of hope some stranger hocked  
in a hospital room while you waited—  
heart pressed to chest—for your father  
to die. Breathe in. Decades have skipped  
to this beat with someone else dipping hope's  
thread into the tiny creek at your wrist,  
your fear swimming upstream to the damaged  
cavern you inherited. Breathe out. *Papa, I hear  
your rhythm, the hum of deceptive rest,  
the steady syllables of persistence.*  
What will hope find with its tiny eye,  
with its very large memory of death?