## Jones: Bliss

Hearing about it, I have nightmares in which I stumble across a rib-cage still wearing a backless hospital gown.

The Schnebbley boy's find was a partial skeleton like the one hanging in my father's office closet,

by which he learned anatomy. A kidney floats in a bottle on my dad's desk. A jar of liquid cocaine lies in his little black bag,

for setting nose fractures. My father leaves the lights on, the door ajar, so his patients cannot trap him in their comedies.

## Bliss

I trace my past life through hairdos: ringlets, pigtails, finger waves, straightened-on-juice-cans, bouffant, French braids, and—worst—sausage rolls flying back from my face like ditsy, exuberant wings.

At fifty-eight, I lie gingerly on a satin pillowcase must not muss my baked-under-the-dryer curls dreading the day I start swaddling my head in a lacy Mother Hubbard cap, like my mother always wore to bed.

Across asparagus and Metamucil, my husband pores over my crow's feet and droopy lids, pondering, "Who is that old woman?" He blurts, "Should I wear a hat? An orange feather stuck in the band of a brown fedora?"

One partner's memory slips away like quicksilver. For another month or so, we're still one flesh, our bedsheets worn smooth through a long, tempestuous marriage. After that, one of us lies awake, trying to memorize the stages of grief.