

## Ode to My Hernia

I nurtured you for six years, fed  
through intestinal umbilical—  
scuppernong of stomach's sponge, bulb  
of sacked shit, until finally you ripened  
into the grapefruit of my groin.  
*Incarcerated*, Dr. Barden called you,  
as though you hadn't built your own dam,  
dug your own burrow, created your own  
Alcatraz in my abdomen. Then *strangulated*,  
skin purpled and green like an avocado—  
you, my own shit, threatening suicide  
because my body wasn't good enough.  
Dr. Barden described pulling you out,  
his finger hooking the air, *I dug and dug  
and dug, blanketed with synthetic mesh,  
double-knotted like a tennis shoe,  
I left the sac behind*. Now the numb map  
of a scar—the kind of numb one feels  
without location; the coolest scar  
I'll never show, tucked beneath my belt-line—  
leads to your abandoned sac, pit of my own fruit.