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A Measure of Worth

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A Measure of Worth

The first technician turns my head
away. *Don't move*. She says after

divining the perfect position: forced
forward, crushed between steel plates

my flesh curdles.

Each consecutive tech lets me down
easy with tales of survival and pin-

curled pink ribbon. Enter three green
and sterile surgeons, each with his own

gift, an *everyday* procedure

they concur, while their cutting fingers
twitch like Quintianus in love. Nearby

a cathedral's noon bells peal, startle me
with echoes of St. Agatha's ecstatic misery.

I want to die intact, yet

Doctor Barber preys on both breasts: *get
all the cells gone wild*. Mountebank wants

to *rebuild—bigger, firmer*, while Caduceus
speaks of caution, seeking to cut off

just the one—for now.