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Gallium Scan

Child, you play different games;
this one is white cell hide-and-seek,
medical isotope tag.
Worried parents whisper, "Hush, hold still,"
and position your small body
on the cold, long table,
a reluctant loan to foreign gods.

Each morning for three days
they keep appointments
with our long table,
with that scanning machine
where your leukocyte stars sparkle
on the overhead screen
as we track gallium-tagged white cells
to secret places
in the temporary universe of your young body.

Yet in the end
huddled radiologists
name no new heavens.

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