

CHRISTINE STEWART-NUÑEZ

When My OB/GYN Said He Didn't Understand Poetry

I worried because my body
is a more complex text.
When he feels the shape
of my uterus, he may not
think pear-shaped yet
an apricot in size, hollow
butternut squash, lightbulb.
He may not consider it a bowl
for a daughter developing inside
with eggs for her daughters,
a set like Grandma's Tupperware
poised to seal away meals,
or nested like Russian dolls,
copies waiting to be twisted off,
revealed. My doctor speaks
the body's language: uterus
tilted toward spine could
mean *incarceration*—womb
snagged on the pelvic bone.
Almond-shaped ovaries pocked
like plum pits—if swollen
with movable lumps—
could be *dermoid*, *endometrioma*,
or *chocolate cysts*. Or nothing
to worry about. He questions
structure, unpuzzles chromosomes,
scrutinizes tensions between
biopsies and blood work, and reads
all this alongside testimony
and history because my flesh,
like a poem, carries mystery:
it produced one child complete
But jettisoned the next four.
My doctor's glossing of my uterine
purse—whether it will fill and stay full
or remain empty—eludes his science.
But when I build a nest of words,
paradox and ambiguity kiss each time,
offspring running down the page.

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