Loss of movement

Sophia Valesca Görgens

The worst part is holding still
as the machine hums around me.
On the wall are rows of heads
made of thermoplastic, masks
to guide the precision of poison
meant to kill this cancer.

I've named my cancer a dozen times
while I lie there and imagine
the silent beams of radiation.
Twenty treatments in, I grew tired
of this and named the masks instead,

hoping they could give me comfort.
Between chemo and radiation I can't decide
which I like worse, but I keep coming back—
just like my cancer, two times, now three—
to prove that I am stronger than this
malignancy. That I can hold still.

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