


CONCOURS DE TRADUCTION

VOCABLE et les éditions **Métailié** 

Extrait tiré du roman de Jarred McGinnis
The Coward

(...) While we lay wrapped together in thin white sheets and the smell of the baby shampoo the nurses used to wash her hair and between my deals and promises, I told her about the kids at school who bugged me, the teachers who were unfair and my current fixation, drawing comics. Wait-and-see was the first time that I didn't have to snatch her attention from Dad or the phone calls to my brother Patrick at college. Mostly I felt guilty and fearful but in that bed with us was the thought, carefully ignored, that I liked wait-and-see.

When the clock had sped toward Dad's arrival, I disappeared to look at the others who had been prescribed wait-and-see: newborn babies in clear plastic cribs (huge tubes and tiny bodies), old people in hospice rooms decorated like fancy hotels, the bandaged, the braced, the dying and the ones who would recover. I stole syringes and used them as squirt guns to terrorise my reflection in bathroom mirrors. In the tv room, I got giddy and ill from the cigarette haze.

The nurses and doctors suggested that we talk to her, but when Dad and I were there together, we couldn't. Instead, we held her hands. I mimicked Dad and brushed my thumb against the mother-soft flesh. Sometimes we sat for hours. Sometimes for five minutes. The time to leave was marked by Dad standing and saying, 'C'mon.' Before going home, we ate in the hospital cafeteria, which I liked. Every night I had my favourites: pizza, tater tots and chemical-green Jell-O. (...)

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Jarred McGinnis