

The Golden Moment

by Linda Simoni-Wastila

I draw the bow across the strings, the trembling G of Chopin's *Largo*, and wait for the small gap of time suspended between noise and its absence, the space where the note vibratos into nothingness. I lower the bow, and the hall thunders.

Planes careen into fields and skyscrapers, a cacophony of metal and fire. After, the sky stills, an eerie instant slouching towards an infinity of sorts. I rest my cello in its velvet-lined case, and close the lid.

You enter this world amidst the clack and clatter of machinery, the urgency of voices, and the stench of laser-burnt skin. The surgeon reaches into my abdomen and your head crowns, waxed with blood. The surgical suite melts into white static and you yelp your hello.

Your science project involves water tension and other physics I do not understand. I watch you release the eyedropper, amazed at the utter perfection with which each bead breaks the awaiting meniscus. You record the seconds it takes for the water to resume its placid surface.

The hushed morning after the snowstorm, you sleep upstairs. The ground glitters with diamond dust, the only sound the tinkle of flakes falling. I pick up my cello and play to find the space in between.

