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Arrival in Wartsburg, Germany

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I glance up at the open waiting room door to watch my father leave me to attend to my misplaced mother gone beyond the purple.

A steepled prison, the walls stretching high above, bleeding stripes—lavender and plum—trapping me as I await the unnamed sister. My father, in a rare fever, races back to me—the other child—and announces her arrival.

I would get to see her soon, my father assures, looking through me. His word held, a fortelling squeak drawing my eyes to the hospital’s carriage with her—so unclean—inside, awaiting to greet a person she couldn’t care about, flaky and cheesy and small.

I stare at the miracle of life closely—unwilling to believe it—watching the pink mass stir under inspection.
Tiny—much smaller than the doll
I'd pretended was sister, crying against
life—like being born was so hard.

Before I could pass judgement,
the mass churned, its mouth
upturned, smiling
at me. Mass was no longer correct.
She had eyes—like I had—
A nose—like I had—
Fingers and toes—like I had.
My father’s hug confirms
That she’s mine to care for

...funny, I don’t know her name.