

Humans Need Fixing Like Any Other Machine

We can replace your broken heart, the doctor says.
A simple process now,
no organ donation or despair, just an upgrade.
The doctor affixes an off-white, circular patch on my skin
next to my sternum, industrial adhesive and fiber optics.
You won't even remember why you were sad,
she chirps with a smile and reveals her own patch,
visible at the cusp of her lab coat collar.

The new beat thumps against my chest,
adjusts my rhythm:
a metronome.
tick tick tick—

a ring of red forms around the patch,
the millimeters where my human skin rebels.
Technology takes root:
an interloper making me better.
You'll have a new life, the doctor says
when she notices me scratching at the edges,
machinery coaxing animalism.

I leave her office and emerge to the landscape.
Hologram mountains and smog dreams;
a man bumps into me, too engrossed in his phone
to notice another person
or were those tears in his eyes?
The patch pulls at the hairs on my chest
as if swallowing them,
consuming energy for the journey
to snake into my humanity
tick tick tick—
my feet fall in step.

The original tempo of a god given heart
absorbs into the mechanical,
the perfect.

By night, I should be hungry,
thirsty, corporeal form yearning
for the fuel I need.
Yet I find myself reclined in bed,
waiting in the dark
eyes open, mesmerized and satiated

by the droning beat slowed down for night,
replacing the need for a yawn—
Tick. Tick. Tick.