

## JIM WHITESIDE

### Last Month

*I've lived long enough*, the father says, taking his name off the transplant list, *give the healthy organs to someone young*.

The mother grows thinner and thinner, while the father's sickness causes his body to swell. He keeps drinking

like it's his last joy. He needs help standing.  
Compression socks bind his calves, preventing blood clots.

The father has dreams where they're all back at the beach—the father, the mother, and the son, on vacation.

They stand together, the tide gradually drawing their feet deeper into the sand. Up the coast, turtles emerge

to lay their eggs. Each egg sits in the warm sand, a cluster of cells dividing and multiplying to make flippers and eyes,

the carapace, the egg tooth that breaks open the shell and, soon after hatching, disappears.