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Ward of the State

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Ward of the State
by Tony Medina

Your father is running the streets
Your mother is hiding in abandoned buildings
The two of them are mainlining their way out of your life
The world is a room the color of a filing cabinet
Strange hands have dragged you kicking & screaming
From your mother's womb
Her hands will not hold you
Her eyes will turn away
Strange hands will have to do for now,
Placing you in an incubator or state-issued basinet
Your chest is caved in
You weigh less than a cup of snot & tears
Your lungs are a pack of Pall Malls strung together
With shoe strings and Crazy Glue,
Thick rubbery phlegm clogging your bronchioles
Soon you will be alone in that room
Until the nurse comes and calls for help
Until the authorities come to take you away
Your first few days will be spent atop a judge's bench
Staring at a yellow bulb drowning in a gray ceiling

Your father is running the streets
Your mother is hiding in abandoned buildings
The two of them don't mean to but are
Mainlining their way out of your life
The world is a room the color of a filing cabinet
You weigh less than a broom
Strange hands will hold you,
Welcome you to your life