

Melanoma

After the dermatologist gouged my numbed skin
for the biopsy,
scooping out the rough brown patch on my thigh
the family doctor'd seen at my check-up
a couple of weeks before –
a chocolate smudge I'd taken to be a birthmark –
told me the lab results would come back
in about a week,
I asked him what
the worst-case scenario was.

The doctor looked at a loss for words,
which I tried to interpret with a muttered,
“Death, I suppose,” making a face,
doing my best to be fatalistic,
all along sure it was nothing.

“You mean you don’t want to know
the *best*-case scenario?” he smiled.

“Well, then it’s ‘nothing,’” I shrugged.

“Or else it’s something,” he nodded.
“We’ll know in a week.”

Charles Rammelkamp is Prose Editor for BrickHouse Books in Baltimore, where he lives, and Reviews Editor for Adirondack Review. His most recent books include American Zeitgeist (Apprentice House) and a chapbook, Jack Tar’s Lady Parts (Main Street Rag Press). Another poetry chapbook, Me and Sal Paradise, is forthcoming from FutureCycle Press.



The Pangolin Review; Issue 6, 8 September 2018