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## Weighed my Options

It was about six weeks out now, and Seth was lying in bed as per usual. Before the surgery, he had moved my bed down to the dining in case he wasn't able to get up the stairs. The dining room's quite dim with only one small window across from his bed and an old chandelier hanging in the middle of the room, with two of its bulbs out. Seth's always found it a bit musty in there maybe that's from the lack of light or the fact that he never eats in there anymore. Seth just started his chest and lung expansion exercises. The doctors gave him a clear small plastic container with a tube and a pressure gauge fixed on it. For exercise, Seth had to breath in the tube for as long as possible keeping the pressure gauge pointed at green. As Seth was doing this, his chest was starting to throb. He can hear ding, ding, ding; every time his heart beats, it's the sound of the titanium bar under his sternum popping off its small stabilizer plates. The feeling was excruciating. It felt like something was moving inside of him. Dr. Adzick told Seth about this feeling some patients have. He said: "Some patients describe a feeling of wetness going down the side of their body don't get too concerned if you experience this, it's totally normal." He was right, but also, totally wrong, it wasn't wetness Seth felt, it was more like the feeling of blood seeping down the side of his body, he feels as if he can track its movement Seth feels its warmth but when he looks at his side, there's nothing. The feeling was coming from inside, but it was "totally normal" apparently. Seth can't concentrate on anything but the pain. It's mid-July

now, Seth still has a couple more months till school starts and till he's supposed to be back at work. His boss told him that when he's fully recovered, he can start work again, doing mostly paperwork and errands but that way he can at least still work there. Seth keeps thinking back on that cold early January day when he decided to do the surgery in the summer.

Seth and his mom were heading to chop (Children's Hospital of Philadelphia) they arrived at the woods center, a big old four-story brick building connected to the main wings of chop. They drove into the basement found a parking spot and get a slip from the attendant. Seth was starting to feel pretty nervous wondering what options he'll have. They take the elevator up to the 4th floor, sign-in and were told to take a seat in the waiting room. It's a bright room, paintings of elephants, zebras, and giraffes cover the walls. There were little kids all around some coughing and crying as their parents try to console them, another's running around without a care in the world. Seth hears his name be called and the young nurse escorts him and his mom to room six. They wait for surgent Adzick to arrive. After waiting about 30 minutes surgeon Adzick arrives, he knocks twice on the door and proceeds to enter. He's a tall man probably 6 foot 3 with short gray combed over hair. He walks up to Seth shakes my hand and introduce himself.

“Hello Seth, my name is dr. Adzick and I'm the head surgeon here at CHOP for all pectus surgeries.” Seth can tell by the way he carries himself that he is a very confident man.

He then proceeded to say, “So Seth, after spending some time looking over your x-rays, I've come to the conclusion that your severe pectus excavatum is causing your heart to shift to the left and it seems to be putting pressure on your lungs. The pressure it's putting on your lungs could be the cause of your asthma. Do to your severe condition I would highly recommend surgery as

soon as possible.” Seth was expecting him to say this but even still hearing it out loud made it almost too real for him.

He then said, “This is a big surgery, so I highly recommend you taking the time to weigh your options. If you decide to do the surgery, beware that you could be out of school and work for some time.”

Adzick then said, “Another one of my patients was going to have the surgery in about three weeks so if you would like, I can get yours down then also or you can wait till school ends?” The idea of waiting months was overwhelming; Seth decided to take some time and think about his options.

Seth then said to dr. Adzick, “I’m not sure doing it in three weeks would be smart, I’ll have to see what my boss says and maybe talk to my advisor, is there any way I can get back to you in a couple of days with a decision?”

Dr. Isaac took a second and said: “Of course, whatever works best for you I just want you to know you have the option.” Seth and his mom then said their goodbyes and made their way to the car. The entire trip home they weighed his options and eventually decided on waiting till the summer.