
POETRY | FALL 2018

What Was, Still Is

By Alida Rol

Although the how matters
little, she blamed herself
as women do. She told only

those she had to and nursed
her shame alone. There was
never a question. There were no

what ifs. She knew there must be
no baby. It was legal and yet
so difficult to lie on a strange

man's table, trust his hands
inside. It was hard to feel the
delving, hear the motor, taste

the pain. It was as right
as it was unbearable. She held
these thoughts side by side

and carried them into her future
where she treats the women
who've come to lie, often in fear,

on her table. Now there are
pills to take and probes
instead of fingers, but there is

no proxy still, for the simple
words and kind touch
of someone who was there.

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Alida Rol practiced as an OBGYN physician for many years. She holds an MFA in writing from Pacific University. Her poems and essays have won several awards and have appeared in Rhino, Passager, The Examined Life, Nasty Women Poets Anthology, and Hektoen International, among others.

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