◆ LOUISE WELSH | FROM: *MY STREET'S RUBBISH* ◆

A man is bent over a dumped washing machine which is lying on its side. He has opened it up somehow and is pulling at its guts. Whatever is in there is resisting him, but he is determined. I watch from the window, worry about his hands, as he drags out the machine's intestines, black, ridged, plastic tubing. There is more of it than you would expect. Intestines fold and twist, concertina, perhaps there is always more of them than you would expect. I feel self-conscious, watching him struggling against the growing snake of tubing and go away. When I return a few minutes later, nosiness trumping discomfort, I see him pull out the heart, belly, motor. He separates it from the machine's metal carcass, shoves it in a bag which he secures to the back of his pushbike and pedals off. I wonder briefly what he will use it for. Washing machine engines are powerful. My Dad told me, 'Never try to mend a washing machine yourself, their engines can rip your arm off'. I reckon the man knows the power of what he's got. An engine worth taking a bit of time over.

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