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## Anatomy Index

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The body is an awful factory. It's almost  
useless to pry, an elevator ride with Descartes,  
more Willy Wonka than anything. These

layers, beyond sweat and waste and  
blood flow like the tides-- these layers of  
phyllo dough and muscle memory lay shrouds

on what's further down, past skittish nerve endings.  
Then it's all chemicals we arrogantly analyze

come morning, as if it weren't all among us,  
as if our days are murder mystery and

fantasia. The gyroscope of dreams whets the whistle  
that purrs in our ears and libido. We touch  
them and they twitch. The gut, the liver, the lungs:

vomit. We cannot find the balance in our blood  
because doctors nor bards are yet sure of its color;

we were born with this just as we were born with  
disappointment or fingernails, but this is  
something we take our time with: knowing

the balance. Too much walking makes sore  
calves. Too much milk makes violent gurgles.  
Too much of anything makes a bad thing, probably,

like they say. But then check the valves, check  
the love, the hindsight depression-- you

have ingested too much. This is not coming  
from me, this is not the advice of a poet.

*Purge*, says the toes, the hip bones, the exhausted  
shoulders. *We are too pregnant with regret.*

And these are not even words because we cannot  
translate them from the body; we will never know  
the difference. And here I sit, the ass of a poet,

the binds of material substance, leaden alchemical  
and bored of metaphor. If the brain sings flat,  
if the pancreas pangs minor, if the neurons assign

words for these phenomena, so be it. We all  
wake at four, shaken with camphor on our  
tongues, poised to expel our large truths, and then --  
the walls realign, our cells return to their rush,

arrhythmia stabilizes, the body and its layers forget  
their alphabet, syllable by syllable, one vertebrae at a time.