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Gutted

by

Philip Alexander Drumm

A Creative Writing Project
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Department of English Language, Literature, and Creative Writing
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada
2017
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Gutted

by

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April 27th, 2017

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Abstract

Gutted is a collection of poems that re-evaluate the way in which we look at the human body. These poems look to fuse the taxonomical properties of an anatomy book with the subjectivity of poetry in order to imagine physical manifestations of metaphysical events in the body. Included in these works are anatomical drawings that create visual representations of their accompanying poetic content. These drawings are conceptualized based upon how each part of the body is described rather than what they look like in reality.

Many of the poems in this manuscript call upon the history of medicine for their content in order to highlight previous theories of the body that extended beyond its physical and mechanical functions. Thinkers such as Da Vinci, Galen and Hippocrates are quoted directly, showing the way in which medicine and anatomy were approached through the lenses of art and philosophy in tandem with scientific observation.

There poems use the subjectivity of language and meaning to locate the nonphysical and the experiential within the body, allowing the body to become physically unfamiliar but experientially more recognizable.

Dedication

For my wife Terri and my family.

Acknowledgements

All Illustrations by Jamie Miller

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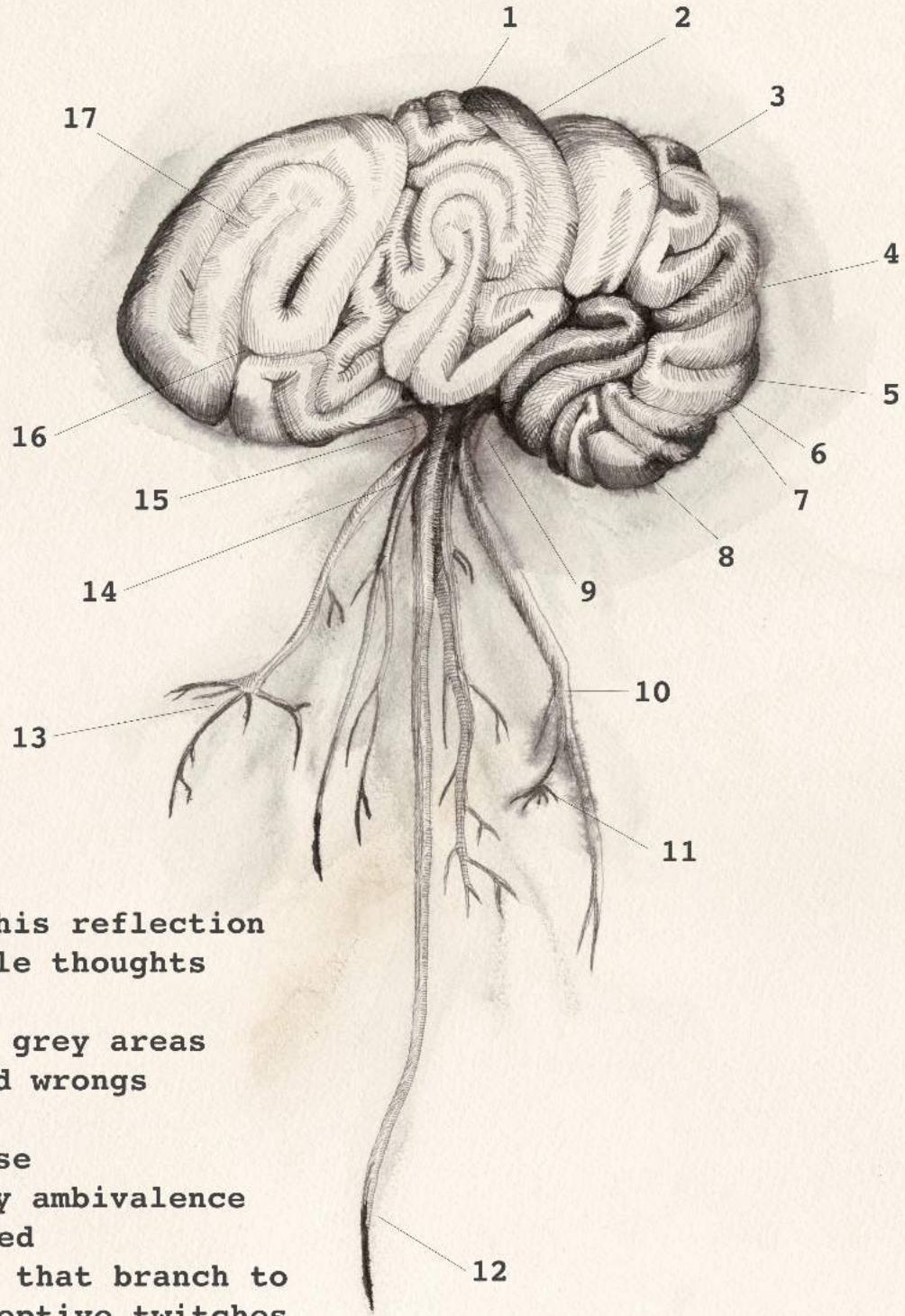
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3 complete men.
3 with bones and veins.
3 with the bones and nerves
3 with the bones alone
These are the 12 demonstrations of the entire figure.

~Leonardo Da Vinci

The Brain

Although the brain has been an independently functioning organ for thousands of years it is believed that it once shared codependent relationship with the heart. The secret functions of the heart were only known by, and in tandem with, the brain before things ended between them. This is due to the parasitic nature of the brain. Where it once latched onto the heart it now holds the rest of the body (see nervous system). Despite the secretive and contained nature of this parasite it is well known that the brain's most basic function is the acquisition of experience. The brain uses the body to this end, subverting all its other functions in order to make experience the body's main objective. The brain achieves this by generating a sense of mistrust in a subject's ability to make decisions, causing the body to second-guess its own actions in a disorder known as Decider's Bifurcation Syndrome (DBS). The subject will then go back on its original choices and thus the brain experiences more. This process often causes dissatisfaction in the body as nothing is ever fully committed to. If the body starts to combat this process the brain will cause the body to make erratic and rash decisions with no regard for consequence.



1. I turn
2. Towards this reflection
3. With little thoughts
4. Justified
5. In folded grey areas
6. Rights and wrongs
7. Reflect
8. And reverse
9. This meaty ambivalence
10. Is spoiled
11. In bends that branch to
12. Self-deceptive twitches
13. And the gentle plucking
14. Of perception
15. That is to say
16. Upon reflection
17. It all looks the same

Animal

Nature was revealing itself
deep within the sweaty think folds
on all fours
cornered

I knew I knew better
don’t sweat the sweater whether
or not
the cold is sticking
run
to the end
of the tether

live by any means possible
grey doesn’t matter
to the little lizards that live inside
the mind egg
they’re all tooth
and nail
and lost tales

pass the code to as many
as possible

thrust it at them

on a crumpled piece of paper

until I come to too

until

blood runs to the whine

of reason

back to the ears

Red hands and drained face

switch place

the bulb that lives behind my eyes

is a tulip planted upside down

I shake the pollen out

seeds freshly placed

often pout.

Vital

Questions arise
in the tangle
post-passion
they look to ask again
and again
a question is just
a period with a hook
in the brain
it doesn't ask
it just claws
peeling past the white rind
to the right behind
and back
to the never mind
mind you it means well
fishing for
nods of understanding
looking for
all the cranial critters
tickling down the power lines

a question is just
a period with a hook
does it still feel good?

Notes on the dissection and removal of Paracelsus's Brain

- Divide into four equal parts

Part I: Let nothing be so firm that it can never be questioned and nothing so questionable that it cannot become firm

- The first section is composed of dirt and water
- Be careful to not let it run through your fingers and back into the skull
- When this section is removed the hands of the body will want to reach up and feel that the section is gone
- Dip the body's fingers into the muddy solution immediately to ensure no disruption of surgical site

Part II: Medicine is the crudest and least adept of the arts.

- upon removal this section will turn into gold
- The eyes of the body will watch very carefully as you remove it
- The body will be mad that you found it and jealous that you took it
- He'll ask you how you did it, unaware he did it on his own

Part III: For [in the institution of medicine] many awful things lie concealed: murder and mayhem, mutilation, corruption, exploitation, theft, [and] plunder.

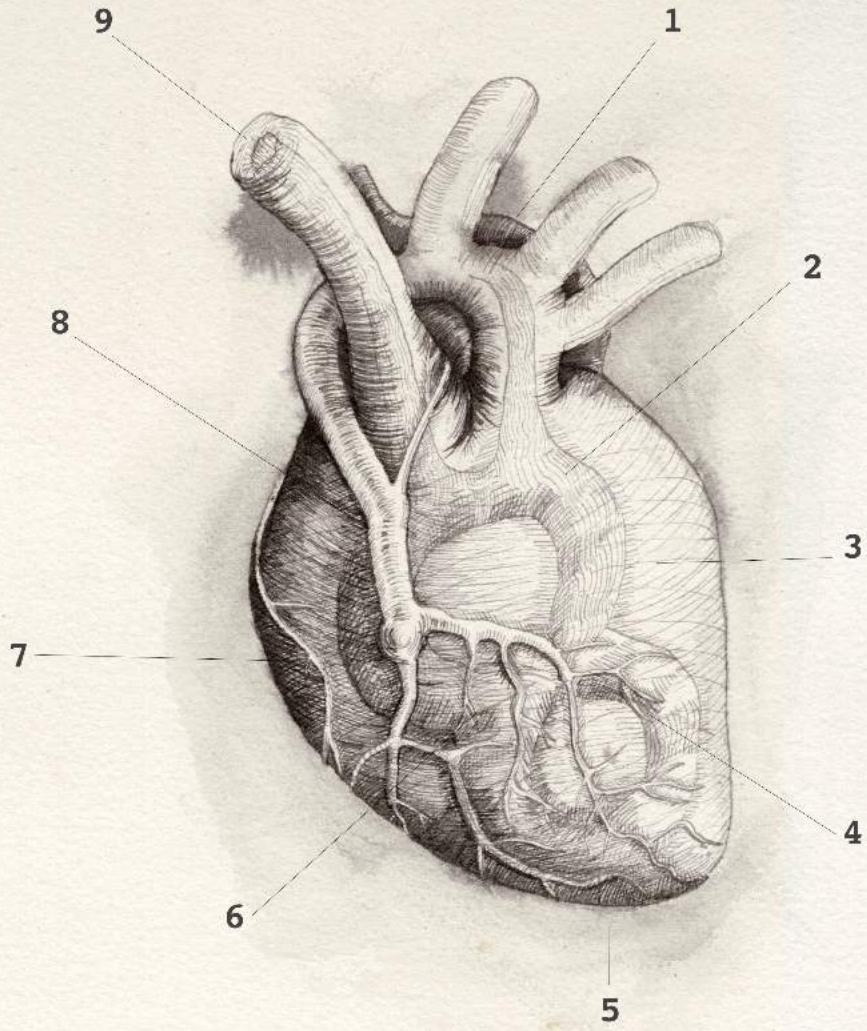
- This section is venomous and is to be handled carefully with forceps or gloves
- The body will start stuttering obscenities upon its removal
- Squeeze the venom into the mouth of the body to settle the vocal chords

Part IV: Learned as you are, you will have to persist in amazement; for who can be more astonished than fools and the unwise?

- the final part is made of stars
- its light fills the room and sets the mouth of the body agape
- this part of the body is heavenly
- all disease will leave the body

Heart

The heart is located in the left side of the chest cavity. Its function remains, as of yet, unknown. Any past bodily function the heart possessed has long been abandoned by the evolutionary process, rendering it superfluous to continued human survival. Its immediate removal is recommended, as its continued presence has been known to cause abnormal amounts of pain and discomfort to the body. This is problematic as there is no guaranteed medical procedure to ensure its safe removal. However further study has suggested that the continued presence of a foreign body within the heart will cause the body to turn on it, destroying the organ internally.



1. Enter the blood bump
2. Pushed to each extremity
3. In unconscious rhythm
4. Kicks in the bone cage
5. Remain in the thick thump
6. A flat tire rolling over
7. Circular thuds
8. Pushed through leaky pipes
9. Left through the peck pump

Mur

There’s a voice beneath the brine,
that makes the mire and stirs the silt
whispers, *whoosh*, *whoosh*, *whoosh*,
in the ear.

It’ll track water through the living room,
kick up the floorboards
murmurs, *more*, *more*, *more*,

It goes for the armchair,
merely finds air
and there’s a knock when the wind leaves
gasps, *grasp*, *grasp*, *grasp*,
but this voice is
that voice
mixed more
two by four,
broken floor boards
above the flooded basement
two by four more murmurs
and murk mutters
means more than one.
There’s a crowd down there,
Murmurs, *mine*, *mine*, *mine*.

Mur

Murmur makes mire
murmurs more, more,
more mixed more
more murmurs, murk
mutters means more
murmurs
mine, mine, mine.

Notes on the dissection of Descartes' Heart.

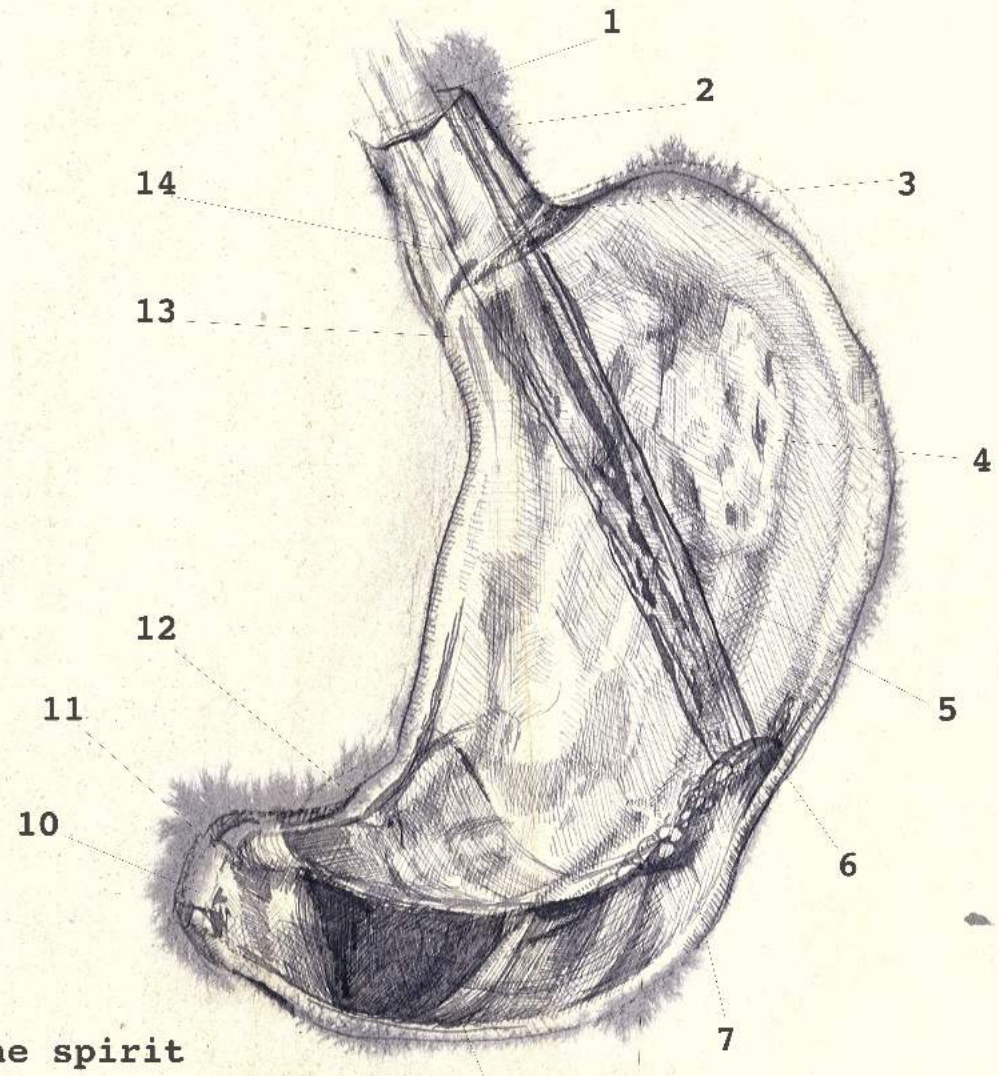
Its first effect is to expand the blood with which the chambers of the heart are filled; this causes that blood, which needs a larger place to occupy, to pass forcefully from the right chamber into the arterial vein and from the left into the great artery. Then, as this expansion ceases, blood immediately enters the right chamber of the heart afresh from the vena cava, and the left from the venous artery. For there are little membranes at the openings of these four vessels, so disposed that they prevent blood from entering the heart except by the former two. The new blood that has entered the heart is immediately rarefied there in the same way as that which preceded it. And it is this alone in which the pulse or beating of the heart and arteries consists; so this beating recurs as often as blood enters the heart afresh. It is also this alone that gives the blood its motion, and makes it flow ceaselessly with great rapidity in all the arteries and veins, by means of which it carries the heat it acquires in the heart to all other parts of the body, and serves as their sustenance.

Notes on observing the pulse of Descartes.

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The Stomach

The stomach is where the body regulates its intake of community. As the stomach expands, an empty feeling of discomfort will express to the body a need to find and facilitate interactions with other people. Once the maximum level of expansion is reached the stomach will retract, causing a need for isolation and seclusion. While the stomach is shrinking there is a transitional period in which the body's need for community is still present amidst a growing desire for isolation. This transitional period is marked by social dissonance, in which a body will want to be alone in public places surrounded by strangers. This dissonance also results in the spontaneous making, and cancelling of plans. On occasion a body will feel the sensation of their phone buzzing in their pocket, even though they don't have their phone on them and their pants have no pockets. Going without community for too long may cause the development of social ulcers, holes in the stomach preventing the full expansion of the stomach to express the need for community.



1. Feed the spirit
2. With spirits
3. Get the gull
4. Get to the heart
5. Through the gut
6. Gulp foreign waters
7. But balance
8. Wet and dry
9. The teeth guard
10. Comings and goings
11. Slow your order
12. Hear the specials
13. Never covet
14. The plate of another

Ingest

Always chew with your mouth open. Wide open to welcome everyone in.
Chew until the flavour’s gone because sometimes you’re just as bland.

()

Don’t pick sweet raisins out of bitter bread; they’ll end up back together anyway.
Spirits sucked through straws sit with relaxed posture. They’ll mingle on their own time.

( )

Conflict resolution relies on chewing, but pride needs to be swallowed.
If gagging persists be sure to take 2 stone tablets, 3 times daily.

( )

Remember that acid burns everywhere but in here. Take it with a grain of salt.
Take it with sweet honey, and let it run. Down the hatch and lock it.

( )

Bite back anything that tries to come back up. The throat will burn while talking.

( )

Put your heart on your sleeve and lick your fingers. Keep them from getting sticky.
The ache is good and means you’re full to bust. Go with your gut.

( )

Digest

Emptiness is born in a belch.
the bubble bursts
the hallway ends at the dining room,
chairs tucked in.

Tuck in.
Try and undo
The nots inside are thick
Gas takes up whatever space it's in
The room is full.

Fight the urge to run.
A stitch in the side
can only last so long
as long as the air
cramps you in.

Growls echo back
Grievous reverberations.
What gives the feeling of fullness?
The walls are sagging in.
Don't push back.

There are *pangs* on the tin roof
things won't settle
water gives the feeling of
fullness outside
the screen door allows for a listener.

Hippocrates Fad Diet for Social Balance

(The ordinary man should adopt the following regimen)

1. when spring comes, he should take more to drink.

Be the one to ruin a party. Have more fun than anyone else because you are keeping others from having fun. Slur and spill. Ask to hear a song no one likes. Be too loud and too close. Be two years old and have no boundaries. Have a revelation of self in the cab ride home and forget it.

2. Diets then must be conditioned by age, the time of year, habit, country and constitution.

Be annoyed. Your life is being chewed too loudly. Moments are being grinded in smacks and gulps that happen inches from the ear. Everything looks like yolk in the beard. Even the sun is just waiting to run down someone's chin. Teeth rake forks, knives screech plates. A spoon in the ear is as good as eating alone.

3. Garments in summer should be steeped in olive oil, but not in winter.

Be the one to throw a party. Then regret it. Remember how awful it is to have others in your space. Don't have enough of anything. Drop a tray of hors d'oeuvres on your new shirt. The blots of oil are there forever. Smiles must be painful. Twitch to no coasters. Try to close your eyes from the bottom up when they over stay. Watch the clock when the watch is checked.

4. They should take only one meal a day, go without baths sleep on hard beds and walk about with as little clothing as may be.

Give up. Crumbs are reminders of comfort. Binge watch life go by. Give direct orders in. Remember the horizon is just as horizontal and it seems to have a lot going on. Tomorrow might be different because you might be different. Chew slower, you've got nowhere to be.

5. The following rules are to be observed in the administration of emetics and enemata.

Divulge too much. Tell a friend. Everything. Say it's a cleanse you heard movie stars use. Pump your worry bucket with a chalky solution and aim it at someone innocent. Flush all the shoots of justification and claim it was a spiritual experience.

6. Infants should be bathed for long periods in warm water and given their wine diluted and not at all cold.

Be nostalgic. Try to make a walking corpse out of a dead friendship. Stitch together an Ex minus all the bad parts. Visit a hometown and pretend it's the same. Grow your hair long again. Remember that song. Remember that song? No one will.

7. Those who get exhausted with running should wrestle, and those who get exhausted with wrestling should run.

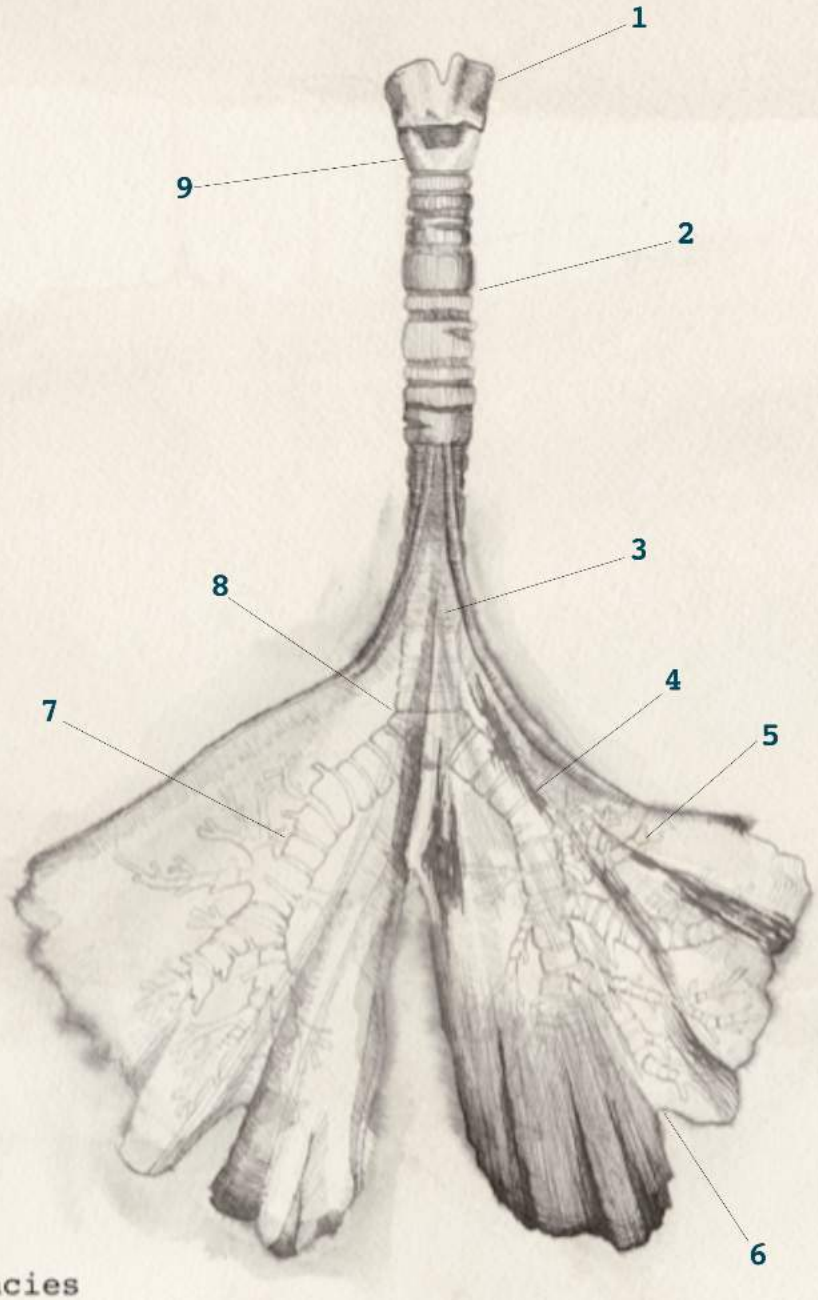
Give up again. In a good way. Run into someone you forgot about. Fight to get good at something you used to be better at. Have a moment where you think "live, laugh, love" might not be as stupid as you think. Remind yourself it's stupid. Let the shit stick to your shoe. Buy new shoes.

8. A wise man ought to realize that health is his most valuable possession and learn how to treat his illness by his own judgment.

Make up your mind then ask for advice. Wait until you hear what you want to. Fake the MCATs. Nod a lot, believe it or not it's for your own good. Pray. God knows what you know and knows what you want to hear. Let your guard down. Learn to have fun again. Be the one to ruin a party.

Lungs

The lungs are where emotion is processed in the human body. Emotion is pulled from the atmosphere into the lungs. Once in the lungs the feeling is purified and absorbed into the body, while all unwanted feeling and impurities are pushed from the body in a process known as Spiritual Diffusion. The nature of this process involves emotions that are pre-existing in the body lying dormant until triggered by the intake of matching emotions. On occasion mismatched emotions will link causing a state of affective confusion. This explains crying during a stupid Ford Focus commercial, or being agitated by the back of someone's head, or relief at the loss of a loved one. If the process of Spiritual Diffusion is going on while no emotional response is being generated there is too large a discrepancy between the emotional intake and the emotion's pre-existing bodily counterparts. In certain cases, if two sets of lungs are linked together, the two attached bodies may live forever. However in other cases both subjects have died immediately due to emotional-asphyxiation.



1. In
2. Dissolved fancies
3. Distilled affection
4. Our needs
5. Hold
6. Our desires
7. True weight
8. Collectively moving
9. Out

In.

Hail is how I noticed that longing has its own distinct feeling, its own viscosity, like pouring water and maple syrup at the same time. Like shaking salt from the shaker, shaking and absorbing it and refining the feeling found there.

HHHH

Under a street lamp is the first place I felt significant. A row of T's filling all the empty H's with light. I was in an empty H that was filling with some shapeless, weightless thing. My void recognized and filled by another.

TTTT

I have since been unable to find that void. I want to be lonely again because nothing is watching me. All other street lamps seek to single out. I hate how intangible it is but the reality is if I could touch it I would crush it to death. I would wrap around it and pull and hold.

HHHH
HHHH

Every subsequent pull doesn't lack in the same way. I am constantly getting maple syrup off each drag that refuses to be pushed. I don't slow I stop. I become a mould and crystallize. I become brittle. I crack. I move again. My amber insides have collected too much.

TTTT

Where will I be when it comes back? Is it a once or a twice? I've been under new lamps, in new lots. I've glowed red and yellow and blue. I've been in all the H's. I once waited all night outside a Denny's just to see if it would show up. Empty lots are a dime a dozen. But this does what it damn well pleases.

HHHH

The feeling is still in there. I keep shaking the salt on it to pull the flavor back but all the wrong ones keep coming out. I want that rich nothingness. I want to savor the somethingness of that empty. But I just keep getting syrupy sweet.

Out.

{ }

You are wet socks on a gym floor. The gasp and the choke, in that order. I felt the push and the panic. I am vacated with low guttural utterances. I see ceiling fans and I am pushed back to when those blades still meant something to me. The thought seemed original but all I get now is second hand.

{ }

Lets crack our cages and compare our captives. Hold them out to one another. I want to see what you've held onto. I want to pretend that I've stayed the exact same even though I don't remember holding on to most of this. I don't recall what I wanted these for or why I held them so long. Maybe you'll need them one day.

{ }

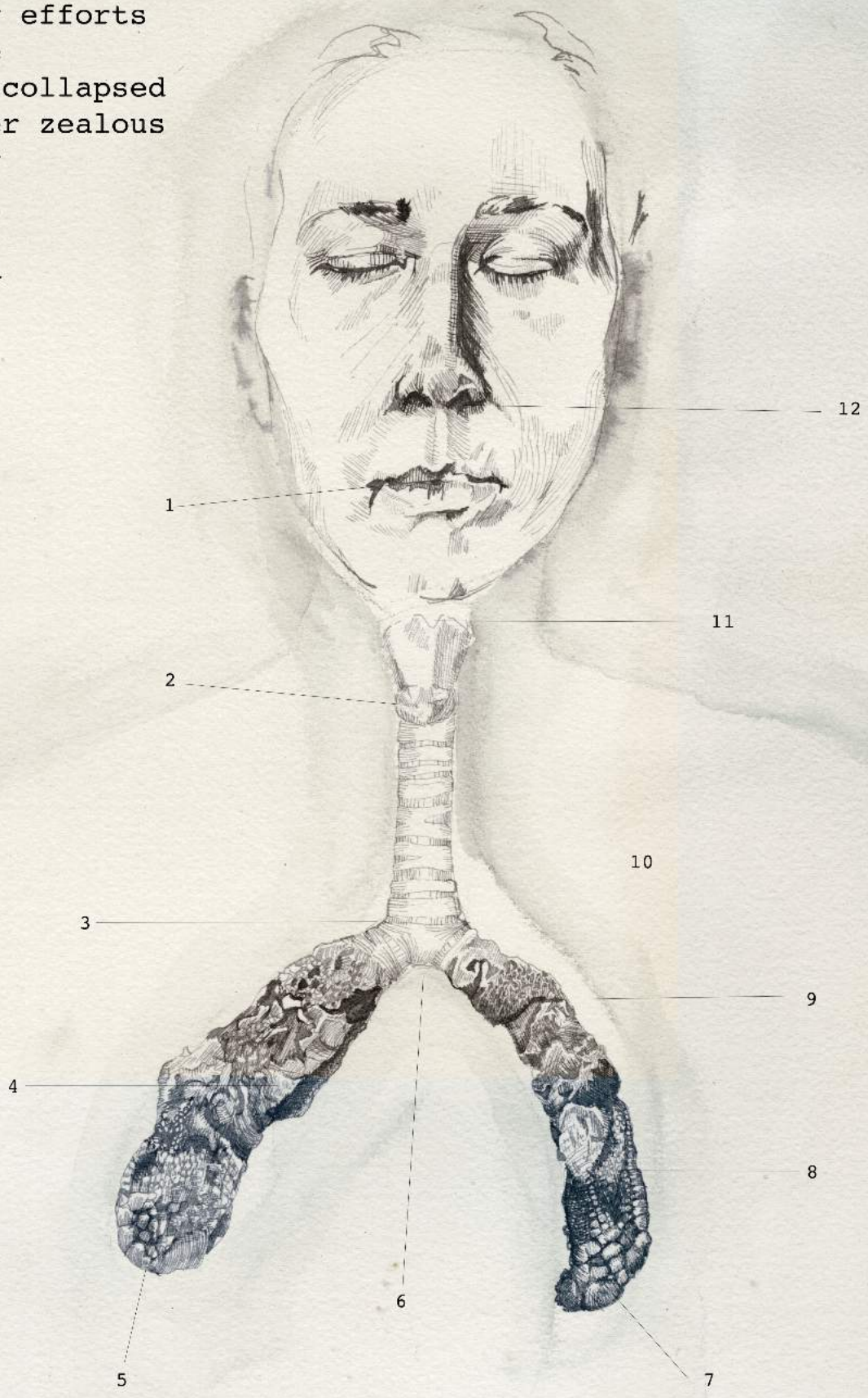
I wanted to see if we'd still empty in the same way. Pulling laughter out of one another by sending it into each other first. I want to burst into tears because I like the idea of bursting into something. Instead we collapse.

{ }

I imagine you getting your chest pumped on a beach somewhere. You keep coughing out little words but all the big ones are still in there. The beat to "stayin' alive" pushes on your sternum and it might buckle at any second. I don't have the heart to tell them you need mouth to mouth.

{}

1.I held
2.Back
3.Kept it
4.For my own
5.I left my efforts
6.Elsewhere
7.Where we collapsed
8.I was over zealous
9.Too eager
10.To give
11.Back
12.I pushed



Notes on Observations of Da Vinci's Lungs

*It is necessary that a pump be set in the trachea to maintain the flow of vital spirits, otherwise the heart will begin to glow white-hot and burn through the back.

And employ the greatest diligence to demonstrate the process of deglutition and also of a high and a deep voice. When one swallows or gulps down a mouthful, one cannot breathe. You will show what are the muscles which thrust the tongue so far out of the mouth and in what way. First you will make each part of the instruments which move and define them separately, and then join them together bit by bit so that one can reconstitute the whole with clear knowledge. Draw this trachea and oesophagus sectioned through the middle so as to be able to show the shape of their cavities. And again demonstrate how control of the tongue has been placed in it. Write on the cause of a high and of a deep voice. When the lung has driven out the wind and so is diminished in size by an amount equal to the wind which has left it, one ought to consider from where the space of the capsule of the diminished lung attracts to itself the air which fills it on its enlargement, since in nature there is no vacuum.

Notes on the movement of air in Da Vinci's Lungs

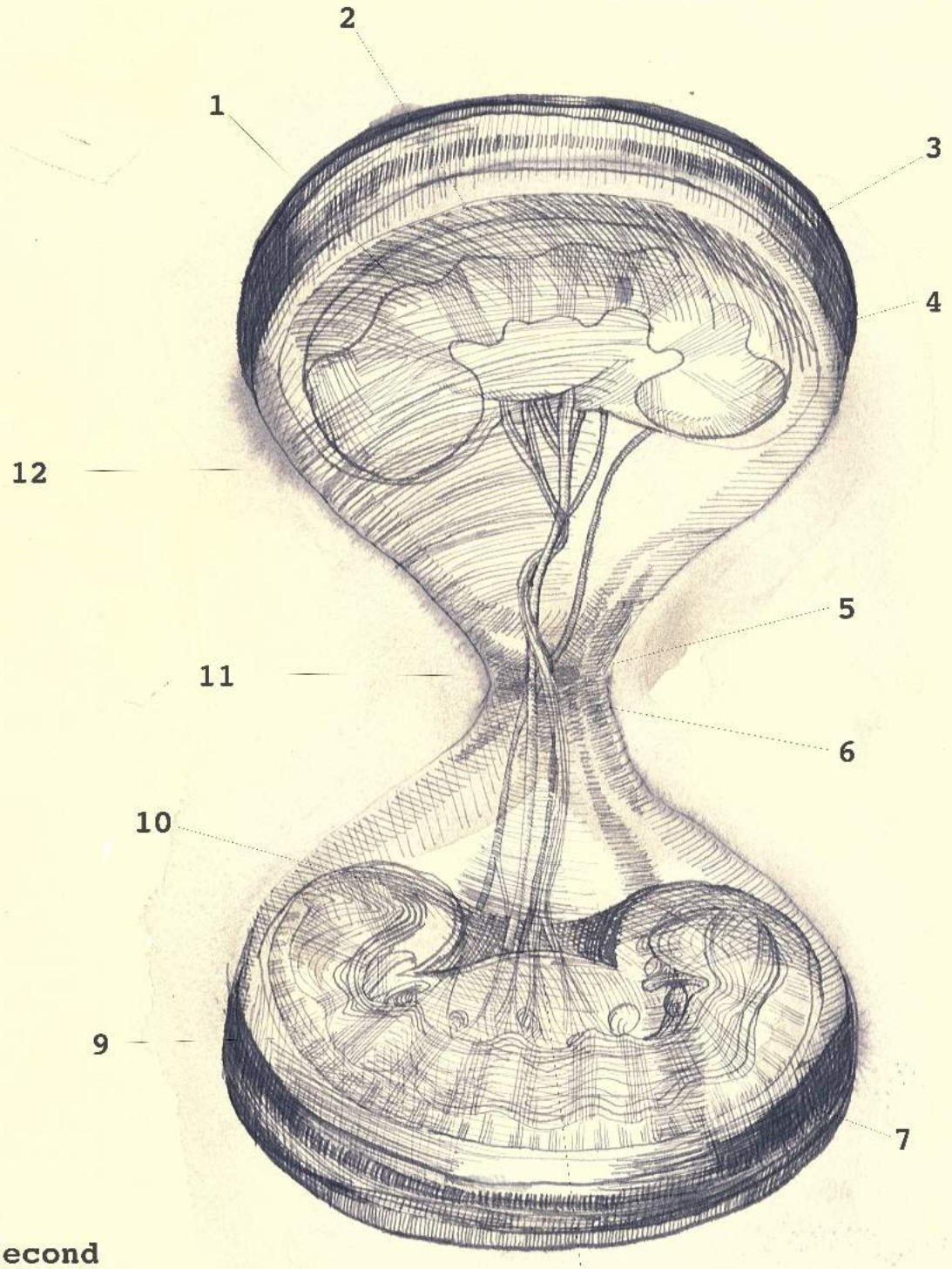
And employ the greatest diligence to demonstrate the process of deglutition and also of a high and a deep voice. When one swallows or gulps down a mouthful, one cannot breathe. You will show what are the muscles which thrust the tongue so far out of the mouth and in what way. First you will make each part of the instruments which move and define them separately, and then join them together bit by bit so that one can reconstitute the whole with clear knowledge. Draw this trachea and oesophagus sectioned through the middle so as to be able to show the shape of their cavaties. And again demonstrate how control of the tongue has been placed in it. Write on the cause of a high and of a deep voice. When the lung has driven out the wind and so is diminished in size by an amount equal to the wind which has left it, one ought to consider from where the space of the capsule of the diminished lung attracts to itself the air which fills it on its enlargement, since in nature there is no vacuum.

Notes on the musicality of Da Vinci's lungs

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Kidneys

The kidneys regulate the body's perception of time. The distribution of fluid in either the left or right kidney will designate the perception of time that will occupy a subject's body. When the left kidney is inflamed a subject will be continually looking towards their past. They relive the same moments and experience their present only in light of the past. If the right becomes inflamed the subject will experience a disproportionate level of worry regarding future events; in this instance the present is always experienced relative to concern for future events. To have a balance of fluid between both kidneys is the normative ideal, rarely achieved. A balance of fluid creates a true perception of present, a moment in which the subject is truly present.



1. Second
2. Times as many meanings
3. Or four?
4. Word momentum
5. Minutes slosh onward
6. Ticks like drips
7. Years ago
8. Stones damned everything up
9. Months when water breaks
10. Till two
11. Years from now I
12. AM, still awake

forward

I am fighting the same fight everyday
the same person in a different place
falling face first
always forward
until I spill
all my I wills

My dreams are never reoccurring
but I am always falling
until I

wake falling

until I

wake

falling until

I wake

falling. On wet sheets.

I am fighting the same day every fight
a different person in the same place
dissecting all the I wills
and how they repeat
(drink, piss, drink, piss)
until the whole thing busts
until there is nothing left to will
in loose anticipation

My dreams are never reoccurring
but I am never falling
until I

wake falling until

I

wake

falling

until I.

back

The past has a pulse that sounds like “did did did”.
Despite what we think it happened in the body. Look out.
What went wrong went inside.

Regret sinews spin roughly like too much wine.

When you lie on your left side and close your eyes you see
it in flashes like “were were were.” Worried it might be
gone. It still sloshes in you.

Rose coloured veins inflame the discomfort in fondness.

Eternity lives in the love handles. Dough that “knead,
knead, kneads” to be kneaded. You are made of all the same
stuff you were. You are just rising.

Fight or flight responses are useless in memory.

When you push it it’s bottom heavy and tips like “didn’t,
didn’t, didn’t.” Everything settles back to the bottom.
When it pushes back fall to your left.

The eyes roll back inside and filter what is seen.

An Angry Letter found in the Urinary Tract of Paracelsus

(Nature is the physician, not you; from her you take your orders, not from yourself; she composes, not you)

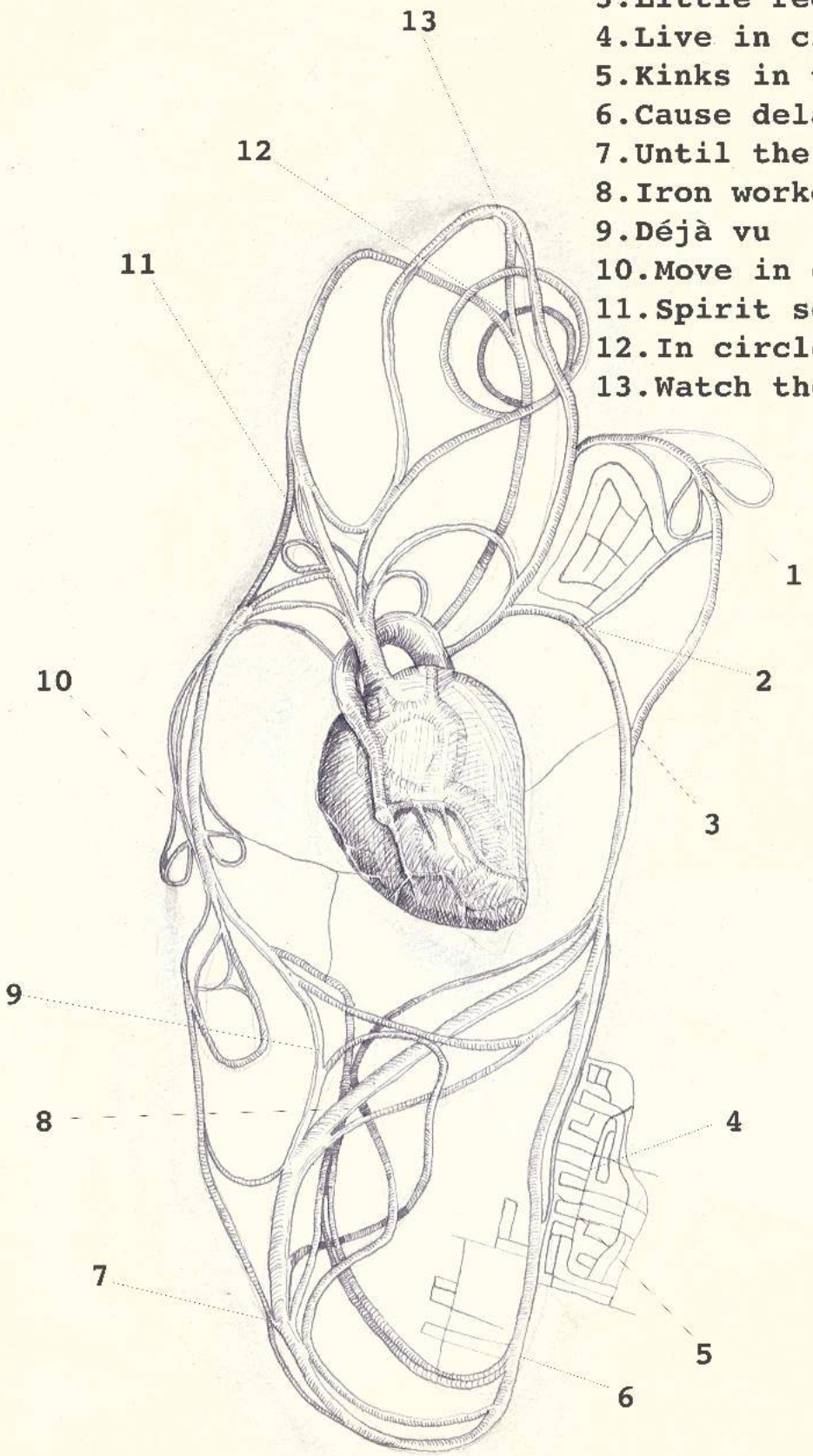
Who can correct a wrongful cause of death? This [patient] has been treated with smoke by you fifteen times, that one with ointment fifteen times, that one with baths fifteen times, that one has been led around with wood treatment for two or three years. In that patient there is a quadruple portion of quicksilver, in that one a pound, in that one a pound and a half. That one has it in his bone marrow, that one in his veins, that one in his joints. There you have it fluid, there as a powder, there sublimated, there calcinated, there resolved, there precipitated; and so forth with other materials as well. Who could possibly cover up so much knavery? Who can possibly turn every whore into a pious woman? How you would love to see your own disgrace fall upon me, as you have often tried to bring about. Yet since I know that you are wooden doctors, you inspire me with no awe. For as long as you have studied, you still come to one final conclusion, which is wood. Is that what your studies amount to? You could have learned that in a fortnight, not at the high academies, but at the low ones. Ugh, what a disgrace it is when every smithy's apprentice can see that your art consists of nothing but

wood. You are like the caprae: the higher you climb, the better it tastes. You do not notice that above and below are equal. Given that you are established on no other ground and that the authors whom you make use of with their canones, recipes, and other processes all lack any foundation in [true] medicine and offer no firm assertion and no hope—[given all this] it is clear that there has never been any sign of a real medicine; and that all that is really happening [in medicine] is as with the cat and the hot porridge.

Veins and Arteries

Veins and arteries are the only means of transportation for commuting blood cells. Each cell will take the Arterial System, known as the Red Line, to where they work throughout the body. They will then use the Venus System, known as the Blue Line, for their commute back to their original place. The movement of these cells, although fundamental to human life, is marked by prolonged periods of silence, detachment and anxiety on the blood cells' part. Many refuse to give up their seats for older cells, others will fall asleep and let their head lull to the motion of the commute, Most just try and ignore each other. Studies have been done attempting to link the movement of blood through veins and arteries to feelings of loneliness and insignificance in each subject. These studies were inconclusive.

1. Mind the gap
2. As you move in
3. Little red rings
4. Live in circles
5. Kinks in the line
6. Cause delay
7. Until the track dilates
8. Iron worker's
9. Déjà vu
10. Move in circles
11. Spirit soaked
12. In circles
13. Watch the doors



Blood Work

I fight feet for
neither wants to be in front
what starts as an explosion
goes into a flow
to a trickle

I fight to find
my feet
running late
best beat down
before beating back up

I flow forward
test tube tested
at the end of the line
blood butted against
the bottom

I fill feet
before they fall asleep
slipped into semi
circles around
the toes

I fight flow
feet from the finish
red plates swirl a round
cloud around me
time to punch in

Blood Pressure

Air is just a liquid that hasn't happened yet
but relief is thicker than water
whole streams flow in you
let the diviner's stick bow before you.
There's rust in the well but the water's warm.

o

Run with the red ribbons and follow them back home
your spirit is spent and it needs to be topped up.
Lava that runs back up the mountain never cools,
waves that curl back keep the current
iron in the fire is thicker than water.

O

Kensington Gore is thicker than water
take the elevator from the Shining to the top floor
go hyper with tension
feel the backbeat in the ear drums
hot splashes run in rivers.

0

The cell has corners but moves in circles
iron hula-hoops are a lifesaver
kink the hose and watch the traffic start
red roots are thicker than water
tilt your head back and let it run down your throat.

8

Da Vinci more beaten.

The blood is more
return the blood
The blood driven from
The blood which are

vessels, valves

This beating
more beaten

called the auricles
the left auricle

The internal muscles
but the external muscles

The heart seen from the left
additions of the heart
of the heart to the two
of the heart

nature in the 4 ventricles
solely for the internal ventricles
the two internal ventricles
external ventricles
to the internal ventricles.

Da Vinci Dissected

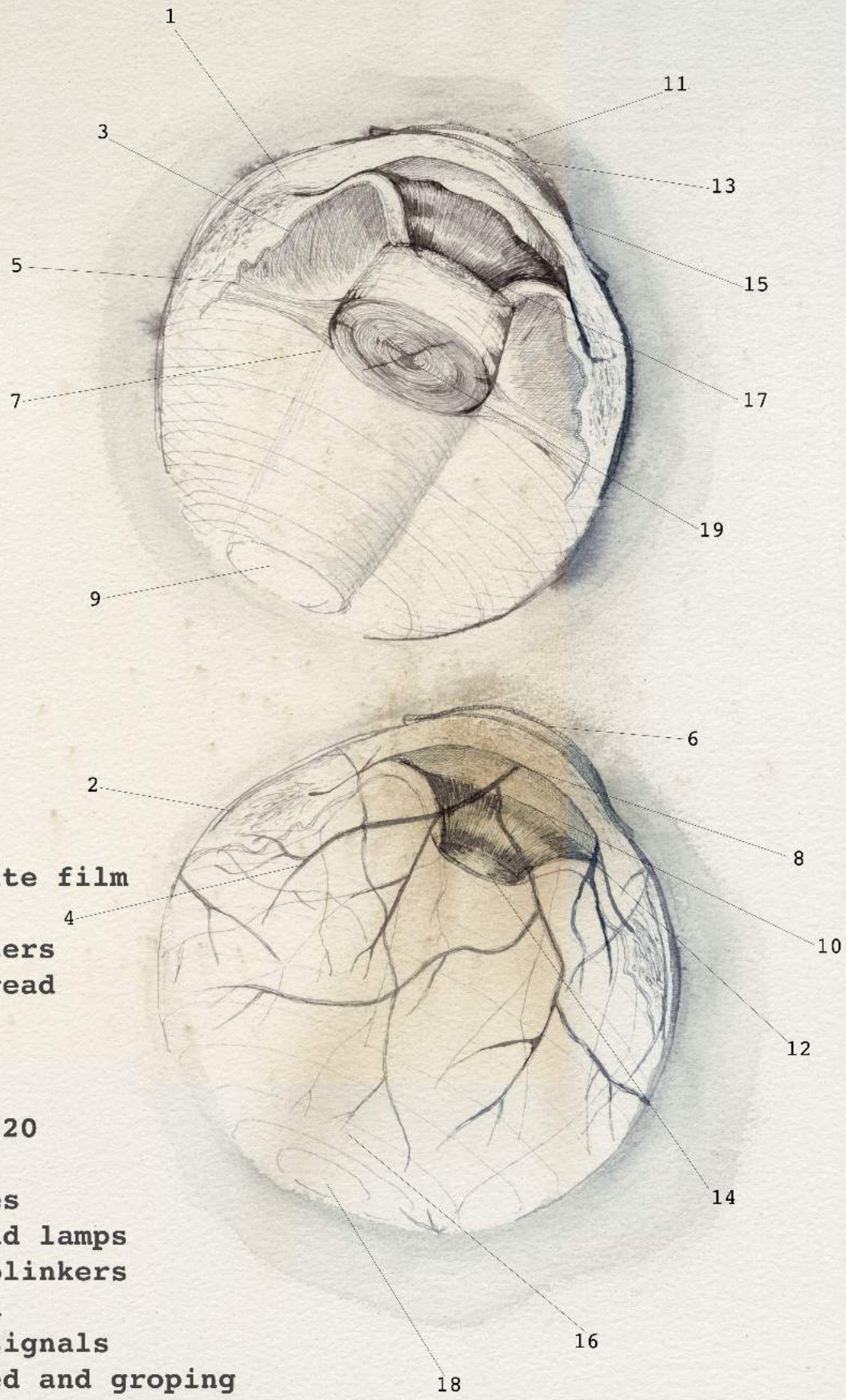
flux and reflux
continuous dilatable and contractable
a larger trunk
crossing his arms
The branches
are of one and the same
receive into themselves
the principal ramification
within them the gateway
capable of contraction
veins and arteries intersecting
The latter are dilated
triangular
the open gateway will remain
triplicate triangular
for the external form only a single coat
to their origin
ramifications of the ramifications

Da Vinci Lub Dub

Additions are arteries and auricles and auricles are above blood beaten blood beating blood branches blood called capable contractible continuous coat crossing continues contraction dilatable driven dilated external external external end from flux for (re)flux from four from gateway generated gateway heart his heart have heart have heart is it is in into internal is intersecting in its left latter larger like larger left muscles more muscles more nature occurs of of or of of of of of origin of one of principal proportion receive ramification return ramifications ramifications remain subtilized solely single same side seen this the two themselves the that triplicate their triangular trunk the triangular up ventricles ventricles valves ventricles vessels ventricles veins ventricles ventricles will within will will

The eyes

The eyes act both as the body's means of assessing value in the world around it as well as being the primary sexual organ for both males and females. The left eye is used to find objects of desire. It searches out that which the body desires, scans its environment and dilates, causing a bodily response known as Resonance. In Resonance the whole body hums in unison as a reaction to the object that is desired. The right eye is used to find objects of need. It will find that which is best for a body and quietly insist that the body act upon the need. This process is known as Gradual Forfeiture. This name is given because the revelation of need goes typically unrecognized until well after the object of need is outside the body's environment. Almost every body has one eye that is stronger than the other, causing an imbalance of power and making the reconciliation of motives difficult. The Sexual act consists of an interlocking of eyes between subjects. The eye that engages in the act will define the subject in relation to the body. Often this interaction is predicated on the imbalance of a weak right eye meeting with another's strong left. Typically this speeds up the process of Gradual Forfeiture. A sexual act in which both eyes are locked and balanced is considered the natural ideal.



1.A milky white film
2.That makes
3.little letters
4.Harder to read
5.When asked
6.1 or 2?
7.Say 3
8.Left is 20/20
9.Right is -5
10.Light lives
11.In the head lamps
12.When the blinkers
13.Are broken
14.Use hand signals
15.One dilated and groping
16.The other constricted
17.Vision hindered
18.By division
19.Get corrective lenses

Left Right

There are 2 of you
kept apart by
the rim of / my glasses

talking
in unison
both
living

but never
touch
wink
inside
you lie beside
wink
out
you float above
wink
think forever
wink
never at all
wink
I fall
wink
all over
wink
again
wink
wink
you are gone

Contact Lens

Tunnel vision never sees
the train of thought
until it hits

When they dilate
they prove
worth the wait

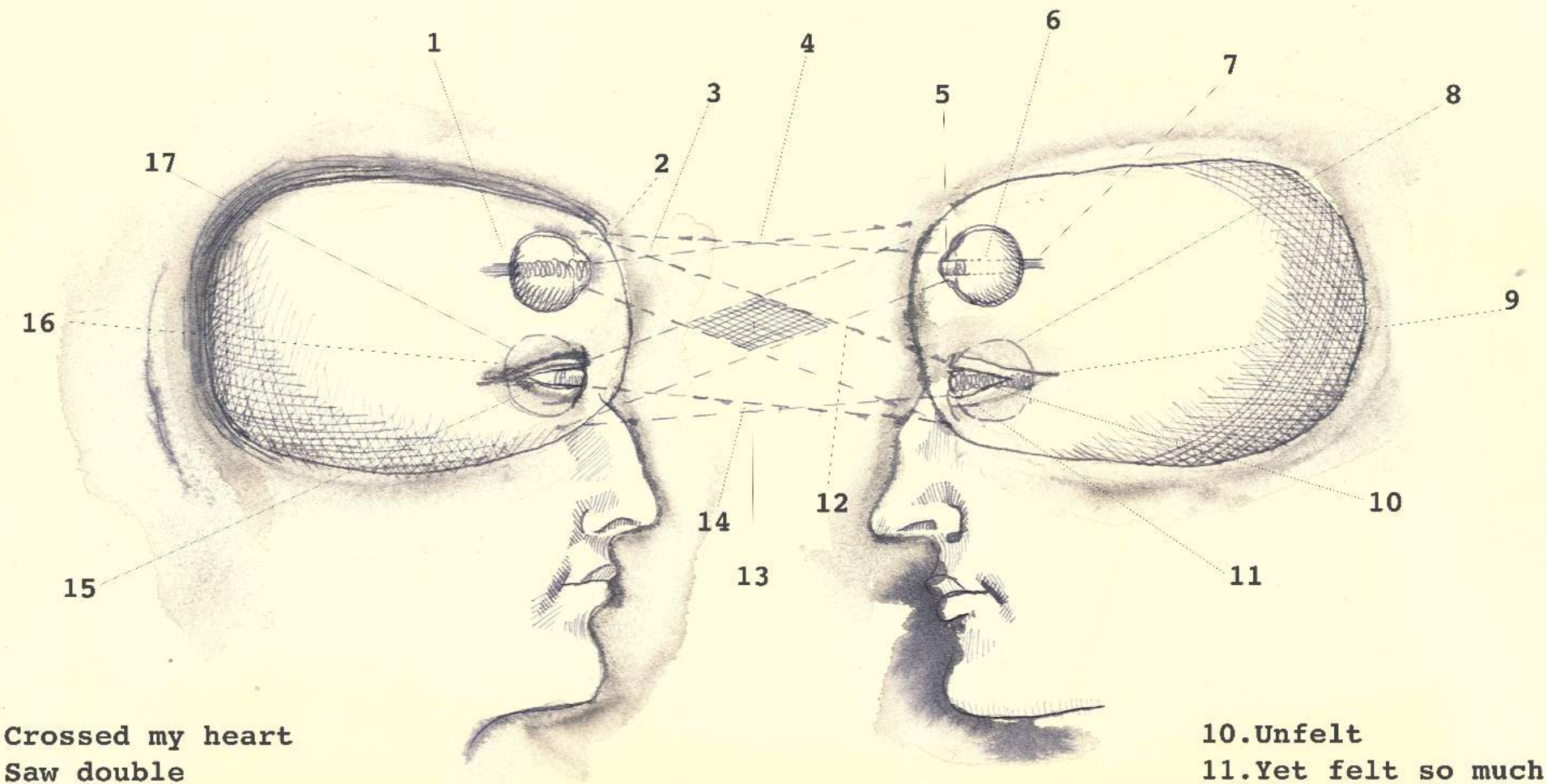
Leave the lids off
so what's inside
can grow out

Roll with it
lock on and let
your vision dance

Balled fists
make better
binoculars

The stairs are deep
watch your step

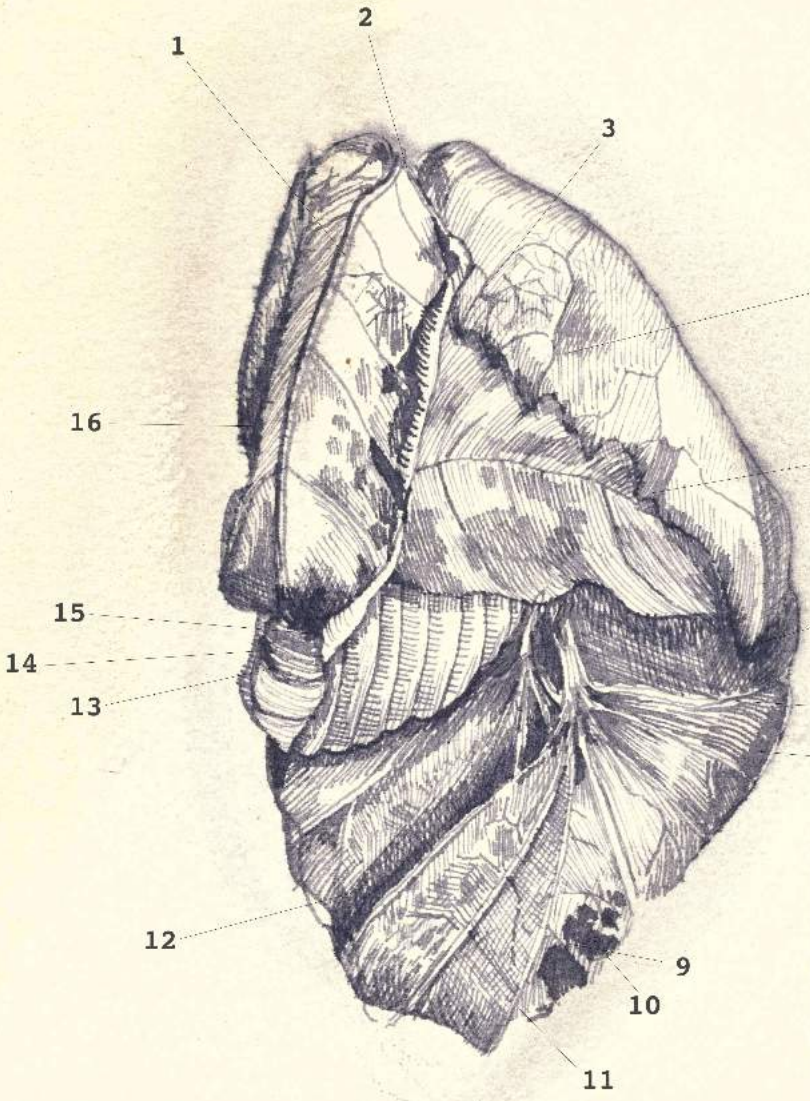
The dares are steep
stop and watch



1. Crossed my heart
2. Saw double
3. Little sunken worlds
4. Learning to long
5. Lifting the lids
6. Crescents to full
7. Moons in a blink
8. Touch
9. That isn't touch
10. Unfelt
11. Yet felt so much
12. More than on the skin
13. Falling out of orbit
14. And into my hands
15. And passed to you
16. We share more
17. Than looks

The Spleen

The spleen is where the body holds loss. It creates a physical imprint of that which is missing or gone. The interior of the spleen is comprised of a particular tissue known as Remnant Cells, which become encoded upon the moment of loss with the minute details of the object of loss. This encoding ensures that the object of loss never leaves the body. As time creates distance, and the object of loss becomes less prevalent within memory, the spleen will begin to secrete details of the object of loss that correspond to the environment in a process called Cholaotic Dilation. The smell of a loved one while walking through a government building, remembering the moment your parents were no longer perfect or ending up on the street you grew up on while driving are all examples of Cholaotic Dilation. As the body ages the spleen's ability to encode loss in Remnant Cells diminishes, causing the spleen to encode the loss of loss over and over again.



1. I found you
2. In the fall
3. In a song
4. I'd never heard
5. But was sure you knew
6. A dry cold
7. Still burns
8. Muscle memory
9. Makes me
10. Clench my jaw
11. All my organs
12. Play this song
13. They know
14. You knew it
15. It hurts
16. Dry and cold

Disappearing Ink

Ink wells
in the wordless
and pen taps page
and makes a pulse

Mistakes are red
and reread
burnt optimism
belongs in the margins

Hiss through yellow
gritted teeth
“dear editor”
piss on the page

Blow on the blue
and dry it off
spell in sighs
and nose laughs

Black is best
for secret sayings
that live inside
before they disappear

Dry cold

At least it was a dry cold
At least it was a lost AND found
At least it was a wet heat
At least it was a black bile
At least it was a quick fall
At least it was a love sickness
At least it was a hide AND seek
At least it was a hard pass
At least it was a close call
At least it was a quick death
At least it was a holy war
At least it was a slight pain
At least it was a chance of rain
At least it was a dry cough

Notes on the removal of Galen's Spleen

~ After making your incision dig past the layers of fat and muscle tissue until you feel a layer of dead leaves. This layer is key in recognizing where the spleen is located.

~ Use your bare hands to reach inside. When hands begin to feel cold, and the blood begins to steam, the spleen is there.

~ Massage the tissue until it asks you a question.

"This seething and fermentation on the ground, is natural?"

~ Reassure the spleen with the potter's earth, dry and cool. Not the top layers of grass and soil, warmed by the sun. They will be of no use. Dig deeper.

"Which has, in itself a native power to attract an atrabiliary quality?"

~ This is a misdirect. Remind it that black is the healthy colour. Night is a healthy time. Silence is healthy. Even the ashes of a house fire need to cool. A flooded basement needs to dry.

"As a matter of fact, not a matter of fact."

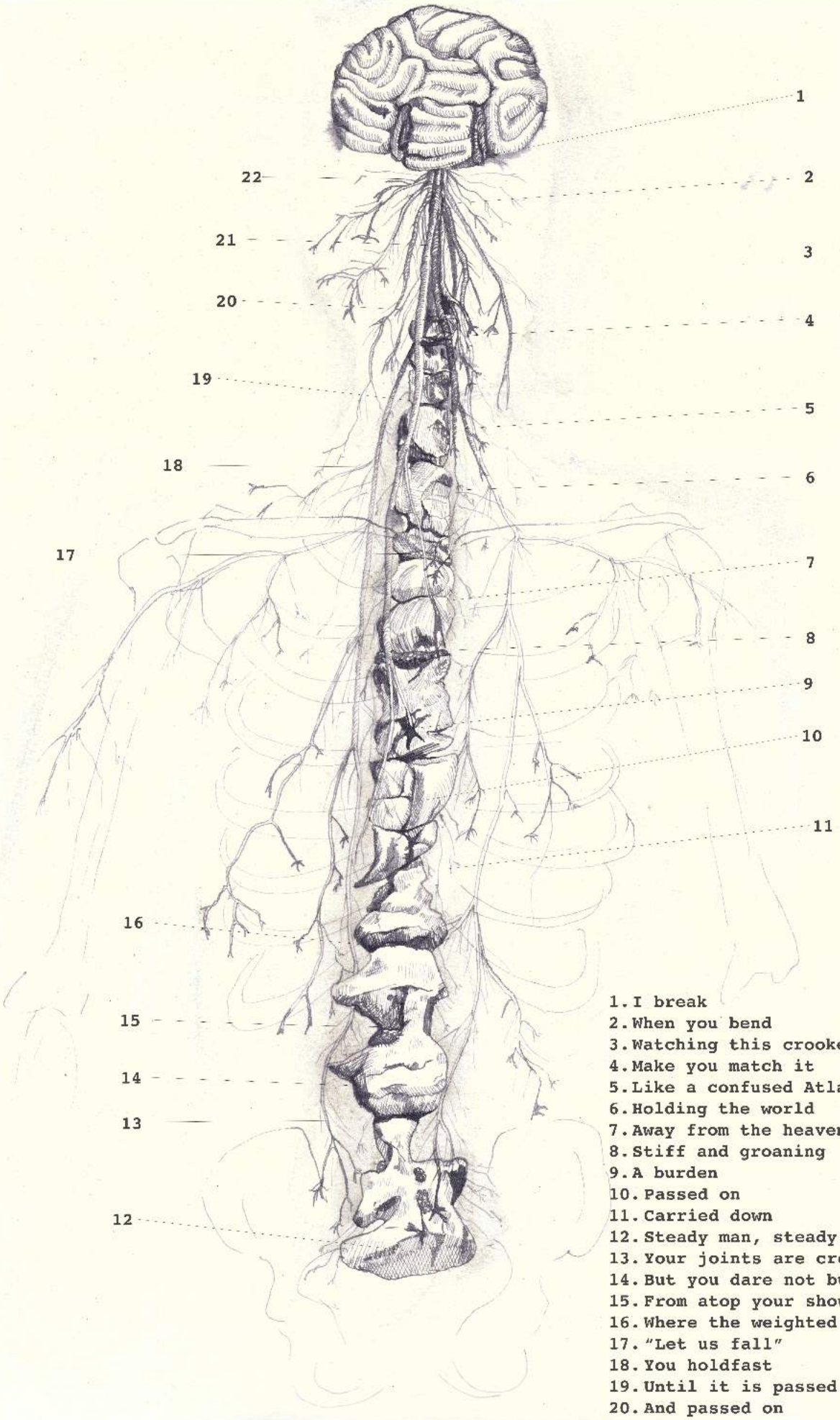
~ Is that a question?

"He who does not despise ordinary people, but always jealously attacks the most absurd doctrines."

~ He thinks you're someone else. Restate belief in the cold clay. Reassure him that every memory gets coins on the eyes for the voyage.

The Spine

The spine is the oldest and densest part of the human body and holds the ancestry of each individual. Each spine is comprised of its own individual elements that, when subjected to intense heat and pressure, solidify to form the spine. The density of any given backbone is relative to the materials that went into it as well as the frequency of the pressure applied. Once the optimal density is reached the rest of the body grows off of the spine, much in the same way moss clings to rock. As new life forms on the spine its hard surface surrounds a molten interior, the properties of which are unknown due to the impregnable outer shell. Some theorize that if reached this molten core holds the substance of an individual that exists before the need of a denser outer layer. A fluid form that is hidden and protected from the extreme environment that surrounds it.



1. I break
2. When you bend
3. Watching this crooked place
4. Make you match it
5. Like a confused Atlas,
6. Holding the world
7. Away from the heavens
8. Stiff and groaning
9. A burden
10. Passed on
11. Carried down
12. Steady man, steady
13. Your joints are creaking
14. But you dare not buckle
15. From atop your shoulders
16. Where the weighted thing says:
17. "Let us fall"
18. You holdfast
19. Until it is passed
20. And passed on
21. And you break
22. And I begin to bend

Vertebral Column

(C1-C7)
I
stick my neck
stick out to see what stays
and what breaks

(T1-T12)
I
jitter and
shiver up the skin rack
and back down

(L1-L5)
If
something gives
it's in a curved S, not
in straight lines

(S1-S5)
IS:
the only
way S teaches I how
it can dance

(Coccyx)
I
am taleless
words are a box of bones
found later

Sturdy

Don’t let the waves wear away your rocks. Always be burning.
When water washes lava it
just gets harder. Never let your core cool.
Never let the rain take down your power lines. Be a
transformer. Let your metal meet
the lightning because it’s where your little spark
started.
When the wind pushes your branches stand your trunk
straight. Even as a table
you’ll be sturdy.

Hippocrates' Infomercial for Better Lumbar Support

(I am not going to assert that man is all air, or fire, or water, or earth, or in fact anything but what manifestly composes his body)

1. This lecture is not intended for those who are accustomed to hear discourses which inquire more deeply into the human constitution than is profitable for medical study.

This is about pain management. You can learn where it comes from but never get rid of it. It's too deep and branches in too many directions.

2. I hold that if man were basically of one substance, he would never feel pain, since, being one, there would be nothing to hurt.

You are a living conflict. This explains that pinch when you walk or bend. The things you are, are fighting the things you are made of. Becoming what you hate is a full time job.

3. In the first place, generation cannot arise from a single substance. For how could one thing generate another unless it copulated with some other?

Your parents live in your backbone and that's why it hurts. They retired and set up there like it's a condo. They are the poke that jolts your posture. This is why you sound like one on the phone and look like another from the bridge of the nose up.

4. As I have said, for pain is produced both in the part whence it is derived and in the part where it accumulates.

You are a walking spinal tap, dripping denial all over. It's sticky with passive aggression. You were once a sapling. You were once a seed. You have no idea how close you fell. Denial tastes best on pancakes.

5. For they must be congenital, firstly because it is obvious that they are present at every age so long as life is present.

Be prepared to never fully feel like an adult. Meditate on it and settle into the feeling like a Darwinian backtrack,

an invertebrate. A jellyfish. Your grandparents never felt like adults either, they were just better at faking it.

6. But although at first the plant takes what is naturally suited to it, afterwards it absorbs other things as well.

Your body does not start as your own. You have investors to answer to. Even after they're gone, and you become the majority shareholder, their portraits will still hang in the boardroom.

7. The year has its share of all the elements: heat, cold, dryness and wetness. None of these could exist alone for a moment, while, on the other hand, were they missing, all would disappear, for they are all mutually interdependent.

The body bonds to the backbone because it is hard. Pain is still a factor. The body is a series of unilateral decisions, different cuts of meat, electrified and doing what they want. The meat changes, the spark doesn't.

8. Those which come to an end in a given number of days are exceptions.

There's a lot less strain on the body when you are bones in a box. There's an irony to preserving the only part that lasts anyway. The best way to end chronic pain is to give your bones to someone else.

9. Care should be taken that the amount of air breathed should be as small as possible and as unfamiliar as possible.

Move out of the basement. Stop sleeping on a futon. Breath the vapors of unfamiliarity and then the aches of consistency will dissipate. Your laugh will sound like someone else. If pain is understood it doesn't hurt.

Notes on the Autopsy of John Donne

12:26 I ask his urine how he died, but the answer is cloudy. I take his hand and tap the same question on his wrist and there is no reply. The doves at his feet are still.

1:14 I pick the lock of the gate and it swings open for me. Inside is an iron apple. When put in the smelter it melts like snow and provides no answers.

2:10 Going through the gates and into the temple, there are large amounts of scar tissue. A fight, a civil war, a prisoner waiting for liberation. The lungs are empty, the spirit was pillaged.

3:02 The baptismal pool is full and flooding the floors with fluid. The water is salty and stains the marble. Pull the plug and let it drain.

4:01 Many halls branch in every direction, some black, and some red. I read the map carefully. Some halls end in gates, dungeons and prisons in the bottom of a temple. With a thief's feet I navigate. The white rooms are becoming farther apart.

5:06 I unlatch the windows. One lets the light out, the other in. The sundial is stuck. The spheres have stopped. The flood has filled the eyes, but both have died.

6:01 I open the curtains on the stage. This stage is red. The boards bow and the water runs. The balcony has collapsed. The acoustics still work beautifully.

7:02 The throat still sings when air passes through it. It's a dirge you can tap your toe to. Prayer scars mark the inner walls, preserving them from decay.

8:08 The bell tower is full of birds. The ring is crystal clear. I recognize the hymn but can’t place it.

9:01 The dining hall is full of trees. The bottom cracked and broke. The stone fruit rolled from the table and found a place to plant. The new fruit is poisonous and delicious.

10:14 I’m beginning to question if he’s actually dead. It’s clear a struggle took place and a prisoner was kept, but it looks like he escaped with his life.

11:11 The owner’s manifest lists all the problems and the whole thing is faulty, but there is no cause of death listed. All that’s left are broken chains and ropes unbound.

To the Unknown Illness

~

When you come for me you need to know there is a part of me that will remain. All your symptoms stay in me. This cough, be it wet lung wretch that fills the mouth, or an arid crackle, will remain.

I am the only one that fails me. The part that waves the white flag waves goodbye to the rest. My muscle memory means something. A meaty memento. A brown banana asking “remember when?”

My love of this life is autoimmune, ever deepening and self-defeating. What the flesh doesn’t know will still rot it. The body’s sense of self-loathing is always what will ruin.

Uncontrollable cell spawning is how you grow into ending. Little sinister pieces of self meant to sabotage. Little lumps that kick you out of yourself and run the place into the ground.

When you come to take me you need to know there is a part of me that will remain. We all go willingly but stay, like it or not. The great breakdown pulls apart what is already divided.

To the Unknown Organ

~

If I knew where you were I would dig you out. Not maliciously mind you. Just to see. Do you move? From chest to knee to thigh to hand? From toe to tongue to eye to hip? From finger tip maybe to someone else.

Put me on the table (my bones saw this coming). Crack me back and I'll hold my breath. Drain the blood the bile the phlegm. Bottle them and let them settle. Each jar holds the weather, holds the seasons. In one a smile in another silence. In one the cold and the wet in another the fire of youth. Set the scale. Hold the balance in the balance.

Let the pneuma stay. I think all these ghosts know each other's names. Maybe one knows yours. With all the weights gone I float. Or you float within me. Anchor me down so I don't leave. The ghost party goes on.

Every cell sits silently. The body's Lego blocks and Linkin' Logs play and stick together. Tiny divisions, united and fused together. All your little pieces. Spirit blown down the straw and bubbling out the glass. From the heart to the rib, in the veins and in the nails. I found you.

Anatomy of the Metaphysical

In 1513, Leonardo Da Vinci wrote an introductory chapter that anticipated a formalized version of his anatomical manuscripts that never came to fruition. In this introduction he states, "this my depiction of the human body will be shown to you just as though you had a real man before you" (O'Malley 32). This statement implies that the desired outcome of these drawings would be visual accuracy for the sake of scientific education. Da Vinci's drawings embody a new union of art and science in the sixteenth century that created a revolution in anatomy as "an aspect of a broader revolution in visual culture that was affecting artistic as well as scientific representations" (Arikha 144). This relationship between art and science highlights the ways in which both language and representation affect perceptions of the human form. During the long span of time in the West that humoral theory was the dominant mode of understanding the body, any observations of the body would have been influenced and guided by the desire to justify the goals and designs of humoral theory. Looking back at these historical ways of understanding the human body has a defamiliarizing effect; while certain aspects of past theories still hold true, such as Galen observing that nerves transmit sensation and voluntary movement from the cerebellum and spinal cord, others have proven less accurate over time (22). The humors, as a theory of the body, appear to be in opposition to current modes of scientific observation. As Noga Arikha observes in her book *Passions and Tempers: A History of the Humours* "First conceived as essences, as a meeting point between our bodies and the world, nature, and the universe, humors were a construct rather than the strict outcome of observation" (19). Where the language of the humors relies upon philosophy just as much as scientific observation, contemporary

medicine discusses the body in a way that is much more mechanical and insular. While a more mechanical way of discussing the body is beneficial to understanding bodily functions and prolonging life it does little to express the subjective complexity of being an embodied creature. The poems of *Gutted* look to demonstrate the linguistic interconnectivity of scientific observation of the human body and the subjective, experiential qualities of existing within a body. The combination of the form and language of an anatomy book with the writings of historical observers/theorists of the human body in poetic verse reestablishes the body as the site of subjective, individual phenomena that wouldn't readily be considered physical.

Diagrams and Introductory Texts:

The visual element of this collection of poems is influenced by the anatomical drawings of Da Vinci. There is a sense of defemiliarization that happens when looking at Da Vinci's drawings. Each organ is recognizable at first glance, yet is detailed in such a way that the organ begins to seem foreign. For Da Vinci, these misrepresentations are due, in part, to the technological and theoretical limitations of the period; however, "such errors… are often willful, the result of his own rich and strange imagination" (Singer 91). One of Da Vinci's more famous drawings serves as an example of the sense of defamiliarization that occurs through his errors. His diagram of the female urino-genital system includes *cornua* extending from the uterus that do not exist (O'Malley 456). Visually, this causes the urino-genital system to take on the appearance of a skull with horns. While it is still evident that this drawing is a presentation of the internal workings of the human form, its aesthetic qualities still seem alien either because the urino-genital

system is visually unknown to the viewer, or because it is known and represented inaccurately.

The defamiliarizing qualities of Da Vinci's drawings highlight the way in which the body is already both visually and functionally known and unknown simultaneously. The external properties of the body, such as the skin, hair and eyes, are visually knowable and therefore visually familiar; however, the internal organs of the body are visually inaccessible and therefore unfamiliar. In the same way, there are functions of the body that are consciously controlled, such as movement of the limbs and breathing, that are familiar, and functions such as digestion and the heartbeat that are unconscious and unfamiliar. The internally hidden and unconscious parts/functions of the body can be theoretically accessible through diagrams and descriptions yet they are inaccessible on a personal level. The drawings in this project exaggerate the unknown elements of the body by creating subjective representations that mimic the subjective functions expressed in the poetry. The goal was to portray physical representations of each organ that visually incorporated an accompanying fictionalized description of the organ's purpose and function, while also referencing some elements of how that organ has been understood historically. Each drawing strikes a balance between the familiar and unfamiliar in order to alienate readers from what they already understand about how the body looks and functions. A significant part of this process was the collaboration between writer and visual artist. Artist Jamie Miller and I continually based our works upon one another's, generating a unique, yet self-referential, representation of each organ both visually and poetically. For example, I express that the brain is something that is parasitic, usurping control of the human body for the sake of consuming experiences, which explains

moments of erratic and indecisive action (Drumm 2). In this description, I look to subvert the long-held belief that the brain is the location of intelligence and reason, choosing to instead characterize it as something that invasively disrupts rational thought. This description accounts for Miller's somewhat invasive, parasitic visual representation of the brain. The cerebellum is depicted as a tail-like attribute, appearing to curl inwards. Instead of being shown as connected directly to the spine, the brain stem turns into root-like extensions, giving the brain a weed-like quality.

These diagrams also include a number legend, labeling sections of the drawings with lines of poetry, creating a bond between the conventions of anatomical labeling and poetry. These poems feature an interchange of abstracted physical descriptions with more conceptual or philosophical language. A line focused on the physical, "5. In folded grey areas," is combined with "15. Upon reflection / 16. It all looks the same" (Drumm 3). The drawing and the numbered lines of poetry inform one another, suggesting that the lines of poetry are physically part of the organ. Where a typical anatomical diagram looks to explain and name what exactly is being shown, the lines of poetry ask the reader to visualize the poem itself as taking place within the body.

Many of Da Vinci's drawings are accompanied by poetic marginalia. Describing the heart, Da Vinci states: "The heart seen from the left side will have its veins and arteries intersecting like one crossing his arms – and they will have above them the left auricle and within them the gateway of triplicate triangular valves and the open gateway will remain triangular" (O'Malley 218). Striking in this description is the oddly appropriate simile describing the intersection of veins and arteries as one crossing his arms. This simile of crossed arms positions them across the chest where the heart is

located. Even the small alliteration in "triplicate triangular" creates a poetic effect in the description. Poetry language shows how biological language can express meaning beyond the context of scientific observation. The sciences depend upon the literary devices of metaphor and simile as the mechanism for expressing its concepts. Conversely, literature describes specific events from which broader abstract ideas can be derived. In my own work, I focus on the intersection of scientific and poetic language in their movement from the abstract to the concrete. The beginning of each section starts with a completely fictional statement of organ function. Each of these statements creates a universal concept out of subjective internal realities. The statement, "The stomach is where the body regulates its intake of community" (Drumm 14), declares a subjective phenomenon as observable fact in order to create a bodily function for community. The stomach was chosen as the organ of community because eating is typically a communal act, particularly in the religious act of communion. The stomach is also where food and drink intermingle within the body, get broken down and mixed together. The introduction to the stomach is followed by a visual representation of the stomach as a glass object with dark liquid being poured in and trickling out (Drumm 15). The drawing is similar enough to a typical diagram of a stomach to be recognizable but changed to suit the theme of community as well. The diagram mimics its opening statement by visually expressing subjectivity through the form of scientific diagram. Rather than offering writing as strictly generated from the observation of the physical form, I have chosen to reverse the process, by having an artist's rendering created from the way in which the organ is stated to function.

Beyond emulating and adapting Da Vinci's anatomical journals, some of the drawings in my work reference other historical theories of the body. In the long-standing tradition of humoral theory, the spleen is the producer of black bile, or melancholy. Black bile is cold and dry also seasonally associated with autumn and maturity (Arikha 11). In my discussion of the spleen, and its accompanying diagram, I reference this humoural understanding of the organ while also adapting it to my own themes. I made the spleen the location of the feeling of loss in order to offer an experiential link for the reader to the introspective and depressive qualities of the melancholic person. The drawing suggests the spleen is made of dead leaves, giving direct reference to the cold, dry autumnal associations of black bile (Drumm 46, 47). Leaves, in relation to the humours, also play a role in the section on the lungs. Again, the goal of the visualization of the lungs was to physically represent the environmental elements with which the organ is associated in humoral theory. The lungs are first drawn to emulate a healthy Ginkgo leaf (21). This healthy view of the lungs is meant to represent the vitality of blood, associated with spring, air, childhood, and the sanguine disposition. However, the lungs are also represented in association with the humour of phlegm in the diagram for "emotional – asphyxiation" (24). In this instance, the lungs are depicted as hard, shriveled, and coral-like, referencing the cold, moist, water associated with phlegm (Arikha 289). Representing two different humours in the diagrams of the lungs allowed me to highlight the description of the lungs as the location "where emotions are processed in the human body" (Drumm 3).

The visuals of this collection were also influenced by Sina Queyras' collection of poems *MxT*. Queyras' poems are thematically connected by grief. Chapters open with

simple, scientific diagrams that are relabeled to reflect the theme of grieving. In her fourth diagram, Queyras depicts an "Emotional Overload Sensor Circuit." This diagram shows "how an emotional overload indicator can be built using an emotion buffer and memory detector in the circuit path" (Queyras 35). These diagrams have an ironic tone, in their proposition that there are universal or scientific systems for the personal act of grieving. The diagrams are contrasted with the intensely personal and specific nature of the poems that follow. The first words after the aforementioned diagram are "There you are, Dear One, coiled in a garden, a hiss in the squelch of past where earlier I cut the eyes of seed potatoes and planted them two lengths deep" (37). The specificity of the mode of address to "Dear One," along with the particular time and place of memory, contrast with the general and impersonal nature of the diagram that precedes it. I mimic her form in my collection of poems as a means of highlighting the ways in which information about the anatomy of the body and its functions are spoken of in definite terms yet the body is also the location of personal experiences that cannot be categorized or qualified in the same way. In the section on the spleen, I discuss how that organ is the location of loss in the human body. I then contrast this definitive statement with the lines of poetry that follow:

1. I found you
2. In the fall
3. In a song
4. I'd never heard
5. But was sure you knew (Drumm 46, 47).

The localizing of the experience of loss within the spleen on a universal level is immediately contrasted with a specific experience of loss. This juxtaposition allows

readers to maintain a general definition of loss, and of the object that is lost, while reading of a specific experience of the feeling, which invites the reader to imprint their own experiences on the poem. This relationship between empirical observation of the body and the experiential expression of being embodied is the crux of this project. *MxT* creates definitions of grieving that are both exclusive and personal to the speaker, yet universal in their application. My collection seeks for the same effect. I want readers to be incredulous about the taxonomical elements of the writing until they have read the accompanying poems. The "experiential quality of the poems" will then reconcile the definitive language used at the beginning of each organ.

Historical Figures and Content:

The inclusion of historical theories of the body, and the figures that conceived them, is purposefully structured in such a way as to acknowledge different modes of looking at anatomy and its relationship to the world, while integrating them into my own anatomical vision. Past theories of the body, particularly humoral theory, created corporeal concepts that were less insular than those proposed by contemporary biology and medicine, as they sought to navigate the interconnectivities among bodies, souls, and environment. In her book *Passions and Tempers: A History of the Humours* Noga Arikha discusses the beginnings of Humoral theory, stating: "Medicine and philosophy are twin disciplines, born at the same time. Just as the pre-Socratic philosophers were defining the world in terms of its natural elements, so *physis*, or nature, was now to account for the vagaries of mind and body" (6). This relationship between medicine and philosophy is reflected in the writings of both Hippocrates and Galen. Much of Galen's writings investigate the cause-and-effect relationships at work within the human body and its

functions. I used quotations from Galen's "On The Natural Faculties" because much of the treatise is in argument with Erasistratus, expressing the need to view the body as a unity, the parts of which need to be understood in relation to one another (Brock 26). The use of rational debate, present in both medicine and philosophy, was the inspiration for "Notes on the removal of Galen's Spleen" (Drumm 50). Using quotations from Galen addressing Erasistratus I created an instructional guide that has Galen debating with his dissector. This poem makes Galen's body the site of debate, physically manifesting a conceptual process. In a similar sense, the poems on Hippocrates, "Hippocrates' Fad Diet for Social Balance" and "Hippocrates' Infomercial for Better Lumbar Support," adopt the instructional tone of Hippocrates' "Regimen for Health" and "The Nature of Man" in order to use definitive medical language in generating advice about subjective nonphysical experiences (Drumm 18, 55). I took Hippocrates' writing out of its original context and reapplied it to the experiential way in which I discuss the stomach and spine. The writings of both Galen and Hippocrates reconcile the physical and the metaphysical through an approach to studying medicine and the human body "concerned with the nature and conditions of human life as a whole" (Arikha 6). Today, the disciplines of medicine and philosophy have become more mutually exclusive fields. Direct citation of these early thinkers in my project allows me to reconnect the study of the physical and subjective internal phenomena by fusing poetry with a taxonomical mode of observing the body.

All of the historical figures I chose to incorporate in my poetry worked in interdisciplinary ways. Each thinker theorizes the body but also develops their own unique way of looking at the body based upon their other chosen disciplines. As

previously stated, Da Vinci was both anatomist and artist and both fields shape his approach to the body. In much the same way, John Donne wrote poetry and also wrote extensively on his own body and illnesses. Donne's theories on illness created a synthesis between physical illness and spiritual affliction. Stephen Pender notes Donne's medical knowledges:

> While Donne's concern with sickness drew on metaphorical traditions present in scripture, the church fathers, and early modern homiletics, his knowledge of medicine was profound. Although he did not undertake formal medical education, Donne cited and borrowed medical ideas from Hippocrates, Aristotle, Galen and Paracelsus; he used specific, sometimes obscure medical terms; he ruminated about the uncertainty of medical reasoning and medical practice; and he was profoundly aware of both continuity and change in the history of medicine and natural philosophy. (Pender 218)

This knowledge lends more physicality to the spiritual turmoil Donne experiences, for example in *The Holy Sonnets*. The first line of the first sonnet is "Thou hast made me, and shall thy work decay" (Donne 846). Donne's spiritual language, combined with his medical knowledge and preoccupation with death, made his *Holy Sonnets* the perfect source material for an autopsy- themed poem in my project. "Notes on the Autopsy of John Donne" is a poem that correlates sonnet and line numbers from *The Holy Sonnets* with time stamps for events of his autopsy (Drumm 57). In this poem, each time stamp relates to its corresponding holy sonnet and line number in imagery and theme. Many of these time stamps take on spatial language and themes, describing Donne's body as a

church or cathedral. In this poem Donne becomes the lens through which I create my own synthesis of physical and spiritual language by creating an architectural description of the body.

My inclusion of Paracelsus is based upon his vocations as doctor and alchemist. Because alchemy was included in his medical investigations in *Opus paramirum*, it can be considered "the first textbook of biochemistry" (252 Ball). Paracelsus left his mark as a theorist who dissented from popular opinions of the period based upon his fusion of medicine and alchemy. In *The Devil's Doctor*, a biography of Paracelsus, Philip Ball states: "…for in the philosophy of Paracelsus, science and rationalism do not compete with mysticism and superstition but blend with it, producing a vision of the world that now seems at the same time wonderful and bizarre" (4). Paracelsus' blend of the scientific with the mystical perfectly reconciles the physical and metaphysical. In my poem, "Notes on the dissection of the brain of Paracelsus," I discuss the dissection of Paracelsus' brain into four parts that represent his theory of the Four Pillars of Medicine: philosophy, astronomy, alchemy and proprietas (ie. virtue) (Weeks 10-13). This poem offers a physical manifestation of Paracelsus' theory to highlight the ways in which his pillars fuse scientific observation with a subjective cosmology (Drumm 7).

Poetic Forms:

The forms and modes in this collection are intended to contribute to the overarching themes of the project, particularly the connection between scientific observation of the body and the subjective experience of being embodied. In shaping my manuscript, I was influenced not only by historical writings and thinkers but by contemporary poets and forms of poetry. As previously discussed, Sina Queyras' *MxT*

played an integral role in the formation and labeling of the diagrams that appear throughout the manuscript, but also in the forms of the poems that appear around the diagrams. The specificity of the experiences she incorporates, as well as the personal mode of address, influenced many of the poems of my project. Many of her poems are composed of short paragraphs featuring a specific mode of address; she refers either to a *Dear One*, or a "you", and speaks as an "I". Although Queyras does so in a mainly epistolary way, I adopted this personal mode of address in order for readers to take the subjective principles of each organ, presented as universal concepts, and apply them to their own experiences.

Many of the poems about Da Vinci are found poems. "Da Vinci more beaten," "Da Vinci Lub Dub," and "Da Vinci Dilated" are all restructurings of Da Vinci's writings, orchestrated in order to exaggerate the incidental poetics of his language. There are poems about both Da Vinci and Descartes that are erasure poems, highlighting specific parts of their writing to generate new meaning. The erasure method afforded ways of dissecting, categorizing, or anatomizing the writings of Da Vinci and Descartes. These poems follow the form of Canadian indigenous poet Jordan Abel's *the place of scraps*, in which Abel uses the writings of white ethnographer Marius Barbeau to generate new meaning from source materials. Abel's work melds history with the speaker's personal identity and a deeply entrenched sense of place. One such poem states, "the / sockeye / shore / the salt / hunt / the / flesh / around / the Spirit" (Abel 113). Here, Abel reconstitutes Barbeau through erasure, thereby creating a narrative that better suits and affirms the identity and practices of the speaker. The speaker uses a blend of Barbeau's physical language, *flesh*, as it pertains to the metaphysical *Spirit* to create this

new meaning. In my erasure poems on Da Vinci's lungs, I look to mimic the sounds of breathing but create new narratives by dissecting what is already there (Drumm 25-27). My poems on Descartes' heart work in a similar fashion, creating a narrative about art in "Notes on the dissection of Descartes' Heart," and mimicking the rhythm of a heart beat in "Notes on observing the pulse of Descartes" (Drumm 12, 13). These poems about dissection and anatomical observation are cohesive in form, content, and theme in their use of source material, demonstrating the way in which poetry can take on a scientific process, such as dissection, for the sake of generating new meaning.

Sylvia Legris' *The Hideous Hidden* was another contemporary influence for both the form and content of my poems. Legris' collection looks at the history of human anatomy and adopts the language of dissection in order to create poems that discuss the act of probing into the body. While the references to historical thinkers and language play a more central role in Legris' work, her interplay of physical and conceptual language is present in my work. In "Opera Somnia" she writes, "Dreams sprung from the entrails / of April and May are precognitive / blood lettings" (Legris 18). These lines exemplify a fusion of historical, physical and metaphorical language. I emulate this style in "Disappearing Ink." This poem represents each of the four humours as a colour of ink used to write, while also discussing the physical act of writing and the different voices one can write in, and in so doing resonates with the approach of Legris (Drumm 48).

Bp Nichol's *Organ Music* demonstrates a different approach to the poetics of the human body that proved equally as important this manuscript. Nichol creates a collection of autobiographical memories that arise as riffs on different body parts. Nichol's synthesis of experience and anatomy creates a subjective body that is categorized based

upon the individual. In *Organ Music* body parts become a means of physically classifying memories, allowing for the function of the organ to be discussed only in terms of subjective experience. However, where Nichol deploys anatomy as a means of categorizing specific memories, I look to express experiences *as* that piece of anatomy.

The act of observing the anatomy of the human body cannot be divorced from the reality of being an embodied creature, as the body is the site of observation and all other sensory experiences. Scientific language can express the body as an abstract concept based upon observable mechanical functions. To observe that the heart pumps blood presents a universal concept of the heart but says little of the experience of having one. The language of literature can express the subjective experiences of the body. The pages of *Gutted* generate a new way of discussing the body that situates itself on the linguistic nexus point of the scientifically conceptual body and the experiential subjectivity of being embodied. The example for this linguistic nexus point has already been set within the rhetoric of humoral theory. The humors were a way of defining how the body functioned while also bridging the soul and the body, the invisible and the visible (Arikha 24). Humoral theory extended beyond theorizing the mechanics of the body, and into theorizing how the body is connected to the environment around it. *Gutted* uses the language and writings of past theorists of the body in order to express the same reconciliation of the mechanical body and the experiential body. The poems have a reciprocity between medical and poetic language that allows for phenomena that wouldn't readily be understood as physical to be expressed as functions of the body. It uses declarative statements of scientific observation to express subjective and internal realities, while also incorporating biological principles, such as circulation and digestion,

within poetic lines. Circulation can be expressed both in terms of bodily function and the broader thematic sense of release and return. Asphyxiation can represent the idea of being cut off from something essential. Linguistically these examples demonstrate the way biological language can be intrinsically poetic. The interdisciplinary nature of these figures contests the mutually exclusive way in which sciences and humanities are now categorized. I use the natural poetics of biology to show how scientific observation of abstract ideas and personal, subjective experiences both stem from being corporeal creatures. *Gutted* uses poetry to show the way in which the languages of the abstract body and the experience of being embodied are intertwined and how having an understanding of the body that is strictly mechanical or strictly subjective dismisses the complexities of the body.

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