

# VALVE WORKS





*We are like chimpanzees struck by lightning, gazing in smoking wonder at our throbbing erections, struggling to hold the words we want in our recessed brains; but, in the end, just wanting to fuck something... to discharge the electricity.*



## Hypothalamus

*The part of the brain that controls hunger, thirst, and body temperature.*  
The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy

You may hang,  
    My Holy Greek,  
In the amniote, like a stalactite breathing  
    An alloy of me, dripping it  
Erotically  
    Down the Escher stairway  
That my ribs make.  
    Your juice enters my heart,  
Makes it a heaving, overclocked engine  
    That loosely relates to that afternoon  
I chased ducks and she disapproved.  
    You may hang, a bud, a nipple,  
A pear, a cave painting, a tongue.  
    You may hang however you please.  
For I can feel you if I push against  
    The beams of my mouth,  
My pilot, featureless as a knee,  
    Suspended like a sinner.  
My crippled, Bacchal organiser  
    That stimulates my growth.



## Heart

*A hollow, pump-like organ of blood circulation.*  
The Random House Dictionary

**You look like a dog's head, panting, repeating noise,  
The doctors stroke your muzzle and your ears prick at my voice.**



## Hallux

*The first or innermost digit of the foot; The Great Toe.*  
The Random House Dictionary

(In which the poet constructs a malediction against his own hallux, which, in the end, has caused him nothing but grief).

You grow in, you burrow, you mole  
You Pinochet, you skunk, you troll,  
You fat twin pig, gout-sponged, you spread  
Take your real estate from the less fortunate.  
You bloat, you block, you foul menstruate.

May an ill-advised Andean climb in poor health,  
Make you peel and crisp and eat yourself.  
May a spindled fish, with teeth and intent,  
Rip you from your prehensile indent.

Even if I fall, great balancer, the equilibrium of birds,  
I would tumble forth four hundred times to see you gone  
and burned.



## Stomach

*A sac-like enlargement of the alimentary canal.*  
Random House Dictionary

The greatest democracy curls beneath my lungs.  
It greets the heavy politics of bread  
And the haemorrhaged logic of satsuma  
Equally and with aplomb.  
The cardia opens like a crab's jaw  
And the forum within bubbles and shifts  
To the offbeat of burp and spew.  
Debate is done amongst hydrogen  
And then, at the Pyloric door  
The terraces of dark, the country, the scent of glue.



## Eyes

*The vertebrate organ of sight.*  
The American Heritage Science Dictionary

A scoop of rain black some ice cream in a drain black a bird  
a  
house a shovel that grits painfully  
against the road black black black  
The back of itself the encircling pink the light through the  
lid  
the hinged scaffolding and early to bed  
This is what it sees but all through water, just water and skin  
water and skin to see where it's been



## Liver

*The bile-secreting organ of an animal.*

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language

TO. THE .ONLIE . BEGETTER . OF.  
THESE . INSVING . SONNETS.  
MR. VEIN AND VAGUS NERVE, H. ALL .HAPPINESSE.  
AND .THAT. ETERNITIE.  
PROMISED.  
BY.  
OVR. EVER-LIVER. POET.

Your bosom is my noddled bed,  
And underneath the skin,  
My ear plugs into some godhead  
And I begin to hear the din,  
Of trapped hates and past loves  
Bad beers and the nervous tread  
As the wide orchards of the hepatic groves  
Python-stretch them dead.  
The plug-hole sponges closed again,  
The flow's directed down,  
They roost in piles like ordered hens  
Amongst the crenellated brown.  
Their images I loved, but your great comatic mole  
Has synthesised their acids to a heaving, wasteful whole.





## Hands

*The terminal, prehensile part of the upper limb.*  
Random House Dictionary

People never really touch, a static field surrounds them.  
They settle into it, like backs against the skein of tents.  
But with a balloon's lens they are covered.  
Cover me, O field, O electric field!  
And let me breathe free inside the nothing-bag of me.



## Lungs

*A sack-like organ of respiration.*  
Stedman's Medical Dictionary

If I think of you at all, I think of you as kindly,  
Insubstantial, clean and chambered,  
A great treasury of exchange.

Your gold is hidden from all thieves  
By the virtue of invisibility.



## Spleen

*A ductless organ... serving... in the destruction of worn-out red blood cells.*  
Random House Dictionary

Eight months before I was born I felt you sicked up, I think,  
From a genesis gut no longer than a fingernail,  
A sleepy forge, an oven for destruction, the blood torch.

An old book calls you the organ of laughter  
And I believe you giggle bile, that funny food, into me  
So that I can chew and not choke, and the bones and spokes

Of the bicycles chicken skeletons make, the ribs of pigs.  
Are broken in your Etna core, your magma that digests.

But most I see a line of bumping, clumsy blood, quaking  
and true.  
Past their use, rejected and obtuse, marching to their death  
in you.



## Kidney

*A pair of bean-shaped organs... that secrete urine.*  
Random House Dictionary

A conversation.

**I think you are the poorer brother, of us two.**

*I agree, brother.*

**You curl less like a Joey and more like a bean.**

*I agree, brother.*

**It was your fault that the incident happened, at that party, years ago, when he was about to score.**

*I agree, brother.*

**Your cortex is patchy, like an old bug net.**

*You are right, brother.*

**I think they should take you; you'll feel at home, with the pensioner heart, the veteran dick, the witchdoctor brain.**

*I will go, brother.*



## Teeth

*The hard bodies... attached in a row to each jaw, serving the mastication of food and weapons of attack.*

Random House Dictionary

You are a display case of flint tools and iron arrowheads,  
A dodder, crooked, Easter Island of relics,  
Some with use, sharp and the ship-wrecked splinters of dogs  
Others, the cleverest, pushed to the back,  
To grumble, shift, die and go black.



Written by Rob Sherman  
<http://bonfiredog.co.uk>

Illustrated by Sarah Ogilvie  
<http://sarahalice.tumblr.com>

This pamphlet is © The Ancestors, ∞ - 2015,  
by way of Rob Sherman and Sarah Ogilvie, The Descendants

<http://bonfiredog.co.uk/copyright>

