

the holy.

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preface

Utilizing Richard Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* as a source text, *the holy* studies the nature of health studies across the boundaries of bodies and time. *The Anatomy of Melancholy* serves as both a linguistic and thematic source for this collection of poetry, and has allowed me to evaluate my relationship with my own physical and mental health in the context of early medicinal practices and attempts to iterate early discussions of depression, psychosis, and anxiety. Each poem is an attempt at connection to the breadth of depictions that exist within the source text, and comprehension of the text's equations of storytelling and science.

The poems are written in a metered form, with three quatrains of ten-syllable verses and one couplet. This is an attempt to quell the chaos of the source text, and mimic the traditional, limerick-like phrasing that interjects throughout. Inspired by the "self-expressive reformulation" translation style, I created a quasi-collage out of lines throughout the text, attempting to admire not only the themes and images in the text, but also the instances of obsolete, and often humorous, language. Within this collection are a few series, which highlight some of the most important themes of the text: the four bodily humors, nature, gender, religion, and medicine. By creating a regulatory form, I forced my explorations of language to take new shapes. The curation of this collection was an act in understanding the boundlessness of creative translation, and the abilities of erasure and found language forms. Through this collection of poetry, I was able to coauthor a new piece of literature from an entirely archaic source, showing just how far language can reach.

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blood

no skill of stars, no depth of magic art
wine of madness, syrups, juleps, peaches
love herself stays naked by metal stars
salt-bitten diet, the party's laughter

the best medicine that god ever made
this delectable frenzy in her mouth
a golden ring in a swine's filthy snout
goose going barefoot, john, come kiss me now!

bugbears of the night, fairybabes of tombs
their midriffs and heart-strings that burn and beat
the beasts that walk by moonshine in the wood
a parasite's parasite's parasite

in plagueless air and purple-blood milk baths
a holy anchor: who is not brain-sick?

glossy

a barleybreak bastard bloody fallen
capcase cushion dance dustworm earthen-spine
engine fleering, fuzzled gubbertushed hack
hot house horoscope intensive jet just

keep up kill up lop eared lapis lucky
moldiwarp mushato nectarine noise
outside overseen oaf obnubilate
pasha pepperwort pigsney pitch plaster

pickthank pontifical ragdoll rosebay
stay lace moonstone superparticular
tenter-bellied tobacconist urchin
vampire vetches withywind woolward

afternoon men all out ambidexter
bishop weeds bedlam chickpea coronet

phlegm

barelegged in cold weather, brittle gem
bubble, a substance much softer than bone
slits of dredged sinew and water-devils
keeping time on dolphins' backs lapped in silk

a handsome woman with a fish's tail
clings like ivy, closes as an oyster
a moon inhabited, a moon in love
dunking its ears and head into the sea

they came from their baths, backbones anointed
wore amulets of spiders in nutshells
such brittle gems pale almond-shaped nothings
cheeks, lips, chins, adorned with spangles and pearls

infinite oceans and myrtle lagoons
blossoms cull, he'll find himself in clover

dog to vomit

veins are hollow and round, like leaden pipes
divers in deep despair to die have sought
a stupendous vast infinite ocean
with a locket-jingling spur, a feather

pendants lawn lace tiffanies fair and fine
to be foul, ugly, and so deformed
divers again bang their hands on this rock
return to lusts like a dog to vomit

butchers, wicked destroyers, and hell-hounds
common executioners of human
turkey-paradise, power of the soul
magnet, cosmographical orpheus

a french monsieur, a baron out-blotted
carp is a fish i cannot determine

strange skin

all soft and white, wet and stuck to your bones
fibers and strings, tinder by a drum made
settles breaking out in scabs: swells, to seek
rubbed with nettles until a blister forms

many times soft and ruddy, sometimes raw
or squalid madness, a hell inferno
a disease odious to chaster ears
it should be no vice at all to be drunk

the beginner and end of our actions
a rotten carcass and a crooked back
two hearts in one body, a fish-full sea
here and there i pull a whelping flower

havens for traffic, yielding coconuts
brute beasts, and drug-sips like a spider's web

blood blood

let tigers friendly riot in my blood
the earth still may wallow in her own blood
incredible madness, thy tongue, wit, blood
from the heat of the brain roasting the blood

such are puddings stuffed with corn, wood, stones, blood
wind-dry brains, hard-belly, corrupted blood
she danced with her rolling eyes filled with blood
to these idols made of flour and blood

a hellish fire not quenched but with blood
she who has drank my vapor's lovesick blood
he specifies a lamp made of man's blood
drier brains harder belly thickest blood

much better be buried alive in blood
oh my sweet offspring; oh my very blood

black bile

if a stone could fall from the starry air
a heart bruised to powder so scorched with heat
i am like a bottle in the sad smoke
solitary and thinking i'm bewitched

when sweets turn into a stony black bile
and from the fountain of all diseases
epithalamiums or mystic songs
exhortations, love letters to purpose

while repugnant to the earth's axioms
but brittle, like children's winter rattles
shrivel them up like old hissed-at apples
by fancy alone, a wizard forsooth

the spirit wills but the flesh is too weak
merely to live like a wretch, and die rich

his

chrysolite-vineyard, cinnamon-saffron
his eyes like doves on rivers of waters
washed with milk—his lips lilies, prune-juice blue
pomegranate orchard, sweet scents of spike

ruffle his heckle-grin and growl and vow
such irreligious never suits his taste
he skims off the cream of other men's wits
peacock-like he will display his feathers

smile with an intent to do mischief
a pleasant meat and his fishes in love
worms and filthy creepers are all depraved
strucken, when she could take no rest for bleats

winds, weapons, flames make not hurly-burly
raving women turn all topsy-turvy

de trop

frontals of rosecake, hemlock, nutmeg, balm
oil of nymphaea and camomile
scorzonera roots, cabbage for the joints
babe and bombax, saffron, dandelion

water-lily and liquorice for sleep
eye-bright poppy, lavender, basil, mint
betony, maidenhair, and wormwood
darthspine barberries, parsley, fetherfew

sweet-wine, cloves, distilled lemons, rosemary
fictitious flowers, tinsel, shadows, rings
linens, ribbons, girdles, glorious shows
preciousness, thyme, and calamint for pain

mallow, plantain, mints, enameled heaven
peonies and sandcastles, st. john's wort

moral rum

un-awesome dice luck and tenacity
feline ferocity and a stamen
faction your salutes to my mysticals
to muses to luster errant rurals

coastline colas whatever taste, oh lord
subside sea or palatial redgum
tenacity al dente atrium
geriatrics is nothing but dead bile

datemonger pearl-gates the way towards pleasure
hell-forsaken charlatan protest cat
morose tantric senate hunk and libras
videovelvet, sieve magic stratus

neck-tails cupid, pair my lectern errant
with matrons, heavy-cased, diverted, stuck

poseidon rhapsody

i've lately seen myself in glassy seas
when the morning shines in fair purple hues
or when the sky warns flea-bitten redness
no water can quench this wildfire

they get their wisdom by eating piecrust
a very monster, an oaf imperfect
with musket-shot cataracts and whirlpools
it likewise exhales the fumes of the heart

how long will they dance, and in what manner?
like giddy-heads, butterflies, chimeras
about gold-hot moonbeams on the water
diseases making the bells ring out backwards

bitter soot chagrined about luxury
that lovestick sea-god with jewels on his shoes

blood blood blood

is a hot, sweet, temperate, red humor
is spendthrift, burns dimly, socket flickers
is preserving and nourishing the bones
is licked like flies when spilled at the altar

is liquid incense liturgy liquor
is a putrefied meat in my stomach
is an epileptic paroxysm
is a tragical hobgoblin palsy

is sipping sacramental wafer
is gnawing on tar like a vulture does
is shamefaced and seldom un-crucified
is gross and thick to the salvatella

is not our nature but our corruption
is not a fruit to be chewed up or spit

yellow bile

maidenhair finger-fern dodder of thyme
with brilliant gems with yellow jasper
sweet malt is made by salt's gentle fire
and hot diseases and a hotter brain

a salamander crisps in the fire
where hungry dogs will eat dirty puddings
maladies of their spleen matrix, or womb
or timbers still concealed by solid gold

like a summerfly rainbow of cinder
a pernicious foppery oh magic
two suns, decoy-ducks coastline tobacco
you merry maids, sailors with rocky eyes

soft and ruddy hipbones yellow-hair oil
hot-dry cubit skin and membrane cupid

the stars look more

like a flash of lightning after thunder
like stupendous and even absurd shapes
like saturn babies, rosy bloom decay
than to see her alone, root of all good

like triangle teeth and earwax of dogs
like a new company of counterfeit
like vizards that are steeped in vinegar
than angel hair sweetness or bewitchment

like seeing and hearing at the same time
like so many instruments undo us
like loins, hipbones, joints, hands, feet, legs, thighs, knees
than gristles or hot animal spirits

like a halfmoon charmer, amulet spell
than to take this idle flirt for a taste

circus

oh, the stiffest clowns cannot resist it
purging simples and the speakings of bees
that fair flower we call anemone
stinging assuming aerial-bodies

but why should the sun and moon be angry?
he can court his mistress in broken french
or he can pulverize you into salt
a cascanet of jewels and creamy pearls

fortune is like a stepmother to us
your angry ghost arising from the deep
a jester is a jingly parasite
a dragon in an elephant's belly

father-eaten sour grapes, children's teeth
in time the sea will waste away the land

wild mother

when the dog-star quenches the river shade
and parches the herbal greenbank laurels
damask pagans paint him and mangle him
why else would god create them but for us?

apogee starstreams dot the navy air
plaidridden schoolboys are so often scabbed
his eye cannot be cured without his head
a bee gathers wax, an ape gathers robes

vomits after meals and magician lumps
city captains and carpet knight housewives
a confused lump, castaway jelly-cuffs
the most miserable emerald-nail broth

magnetic-colored curiosity
oceans of troubles for a quiet life

glossy ii

adamant birth-marks ballet cony-catch
cyclops druggist egg-fruit fitches foal-foot
goldfinch gooscap haberdine husbandman
insuavity landleaper laplolly

mala insana moll monoceros
mumma muscadine nectarine ouch
poor-john roaring-meg setting-stick smell-feast
stigmata trenchmore tulipant watchet

water-gruel winch with writhen yellowness
blockhead bona-roba casting-counters
constellations deboshed dilling dizzard
dolt extenuation foulmouth fox

glutton-honed intempestive pantofle
powdered puppet salvatella speckle

in the temple of our venus

ivy-clasping arms, or oyster-kissing
leading a sweaty camel to cairo
cured with clay, spittle, fire and brimstone
it will rain meteors and stones, frogs, mice

she lets down a flowing beard, filled with scrubs
her smutty language like a donkeys bray
her sweet-malt doggerel, wayward-cudgel
her flippant spouters avaunt and say “pish”

unless (white crow) an honest one is found
tasting every dish, sipping every cup
alien-cures madder than her patient
she has set them in slippery places

a medicinal marigold-cockfight
when all three kinds of love meet together

star cake

it is an easy passage down to hell
your honeysuckle of the hawthorn-hedge
vouchsafe in cupid's cup, your heart's dear blood
fatally driven upon this gone-rock

baby arts, his torches that give no light
he swallows up a love-pastry dogma
envy, she gnaws at so many chainlinks
surviving on a diet meant to ill

my subject is all man and humankind
bleary eyes and lonesome color diseased
broiled buttered seedfritters pancake pies
unstopped by the bottom of the brimmer

built on the force of imagination
each nerve bitten by jovial fleabags

de trop ii

shovelboard, chess-play, shuttlecock friars
billiards, violence solitary
fauns and lovers and ladies and dicegames
rotting bones and long-legged hairyhorse

purblinds and habitations like molehills
maggot-eaten relics, miserable
an unlucky kiss, three upper planets
precious stones and dead man's clothes, myrtle trees

extremity of cold, lost fingers, toes
all-devouring and murdering gut
damp standing water, thick and ill-colored
old coins, statues, rules, edicts, manuscripts

an astrologer deemed him masculine
brush pulled up by its own roots, carcasses

moral rum ii

known to vacate his temper, fugitive
critical lecture, turgid humid mouth
censor manifester, illustrious
virgo dignity bites the grand locust

vanquisher, essential necromancer
tango diving sheds, chariot-data
visual lunatic artillery
and whose mittens just sit right here with us

ingot panda, offended stomach-churn
opossum-bonus, open-nostril apt
lava dominoes and cloud citruses
rabies cohorts and squid of my fungus

but those pellets feed the vultures that eat
candied jubilees and phlebotomy

coterie

picked off choice flowers of my tilled gardens
because i knew nothing. it was pleasant
to see those pretty knots, swimming figures
and the sun and moon chase around the earth

but it rains daggers with their tips downward
and frozen oceans always mourn and burn
eleven heavens, in orbs and circles
i'll stay within this sublunary maze

i was born to consume fruits of the earth
like a horse in a cinder-blown stable
remembering like a snuffed-out candle
diffused under the ribs and rotting bones

so give me my wood-physic cordial
i am ready to die with you, creature

heart typography

double-skinned arteries surround the heart
bit by an iron bullet flinty heart
count the parasangs between tongue and heart
to fetch air to refrigerate the heart

in idleness achilles ate his heart
red forthwith flock from the brain to the heart
palpitating, leaden drip aching heart
lures our souls to sleep and puffs up our heart

she engraved his simper on her own heart
a vainglory private-grudge inner-heart
where a dismay anoints the whirlwind heart
dissolving the spirits, infection heart

divine precepts can counterpoise your heart
a gourd for the head a pepon for heart

luster

like a burning-glass projects its sunbeams
vast and full of innumerable flames
the brighter parts of earth, the dusky sea
choking barking of a dog, violet burn

cherryplum light, sweeter smell, marmalade
a lamp chokes on its oil, delicious warmth
shine in jewels, stink in pallid conditions
morning fair and hot, noon-day cold and moist

visible stars seen in the firmament
purging the spots on the face of the moon
by conquering the earth you win the stars
exotic versicolour violence

purging upward and downward throws of light
miserable whiteness like a lily

de trop iii

the nightly noxious, the enchanting blaze
cample boggy-brangling cut-works oilet
forefinger-fern perstringe rabato ruff
oleander-sponger, constable-churl

plashed, pleached, pullen, churl-colly dorp-sallet
the planet of chief influence, seabreeze
treacle, double-dealer, time-server
a garden enclosed, singing of the ears

a glutton, his belly: a soap, his juice
manifestly convicted of madness
stalking-horses, setting-dogs, decoy-ducks
quails fed on that which was poison to men

wine of hellebore, scilla, sea-onion
pennyroyal, mustard, strong as ginger