

Magistra corporis

I dream about you
dreams that are not serene and sunny,
like the dreams of lovers and friends.
Not the sticky, bizarre tales of nightmares either.
They arrive calmly, carrying a fleeting feeling
of clarity.

I picture the intertwined tendons of your
sinewy forearms,
see the diaphanous fascia, gentle yet
unwavering in its
encapsulation of your muscles,
feel the strength of your rocky spine.

In these dreams, you are my teacher, my
challenge, my idol.
You have taught me the science of anatomy.
Thanks to you, I can identify the brachial
plexus or locate the femoral triangle at
the border of the sartorius.
The more compelling lesson,
the staggering complexity, elegance, power
of the human body.
The precise architecture of your bones
and muscles,
a machine, perhaps a bit ragged,
but meticulously assembled and perfect
nonetheless.

In turn, you demand excellence.
You dare me
to remember every tendon, artery and nerve.
You force me to stand for hours on end
and distinguish between muscles.

Your body, an enigma, conjures a tornado of whats and whys
and carries me until my head is spinning.
The bruises on your legs, your pink nail
polish, a freckle
feed the storm, spawning an all-consuming,
unrelentless cyclone.

The scar on your chest speaks to human
resilience.
The blisters on your feet weave tales of
roads traveled.
Your body brings knowledge, your sacrifice—
compassion.

You remind me to be patient, to be careful,
to be kind.

—Yelizaveta Gribkova

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