

Anatomy

We would see all of him:
the wisps of hair around his nipples,
the parachute valves inside his heart,
his guts, blooming from his abdomen.

We would open his kidney like a book
and find old pyramids and columns.
We would admire the tendons of his palm
as they fanned out toward manicured fingernails.

We would break into his joints,
and bend his knee to find
a thick rim of silver, gliding against
a translucent root, which was labeled: "ANT."

But on the first day, when we pulled off the cloth
(back then, it was still white)
and Tommy slid the blade
onto the stalk of the scalpel,

I looked down and found
my gloved hand resting on a pale forearm,
my thumb moving back and forth,
back and forth.

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