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After the Heart Attack

by Linda Chown

Sometimes I drive myself crazy
imagining your blood, those silent red rivers.
Sometimes I’d like to go right through your skin
and know for sure that no jagged rocks
mar its even flow, that your channels
are wide and clear and clean, fit
for any worthy boat to sail away and go.
I would vacuum clean those veins for you.
I would build you dikes of polished stone.

But I can’t come in. You’re no toy doll
I can ever pull apart and know.
Your big heart beats behind awareness,
a thing no blood test can ever show.
For we sleep with faith, wake to a mystery
again and again and then pull words from us
like clams from reluctant shells,
spooning cold litanies of sound into morning streets.
I fear that no two hearts can ever meet.

But I would see you beat
those grey gamblers at their actuarial games
to live on beyond them,
to move across dying
like sunspots slither over the sun,
I would hear you sing in the bathroom
and watch you go at night to walk alone
and wake to take you to me,
to press that impermeable skin to me,
to lie curled up in a prosperous silence
where we can rock and share and smell
where we can warble a few of our offbeat tunes
until the underground rivers run wild
and put a stop to our splendid show.