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# The Timid Dissection of a Deteriorating Lung

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# The Timid Dissection of a Deteriorating Lung

JASON REDERSTORF

*al-lusion: a ventricle, once torn, is only as strong as the strongest stitch; even sutures that defend the weary are secure, like doors and windows and homes—are guaranteed to break and shatter and abandon.*

if beauty were a **[figure]**  
 within a thought,  
 wrapped tightly in loose skin—  
     a tempered mannequin,  
         an elusive doll—  
 left out for the sun  
 to devour, for eyes  
 to pick apart and drool over:  
     *epiphora*, nursed in the bloodstream,  
     the lachrymal glands, *obstructed*—  
 like a dull blade teasing  
 the underbelly, spilling  
 your terrific guts onto  
 the cement canvas below  
     *(if by meaning beauty: the merging of shadow  
     and colour, desire in crimson tide pools)*—  
 selfishly constructed and fracturing  
 beneath the weight of  
 a careless mind, this **[figure]**  
 would fold in on itself,  
 if not already inverted,  
 and wither,  
     like a  
     a sun-deprived bud revealing  
     its misunderstood condition.

A seven second word  
 spells trouble  
 when arid hearts fade  
 like the worn photographs  
 of her—  
     the wearisome smile,  
     the half-hearted attempt

to dislocate—  
a corner that once burned wistfully  
and was blown or shaken out  
by someone who was still  
holding on too tightly,  
holding on too blindly,  
holding on too faithfully—

faithlessly,

to what once could have been—  
to what *was* once,  
now diluted.