

POETRY | FALL 2020

To A Body Donor

By Adam Lalley

There is still a silence, just for a moment,
when we approach you. The skin on your shins
has become thin, like Bible paper,

and young women you have never met
handled you gently like a borrowed thing
to give you back to yourself

when they were done. Through curtains
of bone and muscle, in our hands
your heart saw light as though it had just been born,

new to our sight, and yet we do not know
if you wore glasses or had a sweet tooth.
With every cut, you depart from us,

and what we learn of you cannot hold
your interest, cannot compare to the astonishment
you see behind the blinded blue of your eyes.

Adam Lalley MD is an Emergency Medicine resident at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn and a graduate of the Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell. He is a winner of the Michael E. DeBakey Medical Student Poetry Award, hosted by Baylor College of Medicine, and the William Carlos Williams Poetry Competition, hosted by Northeast Ohio Medical University. His short fiction, poetry, and non-fiction have been featured in *Intima: A Journal of Narrative Medicine*, *Narrateur: Reflections on Caring*, the *Journal of Medical Humanities* and *The Eagle and the Wren Reading Series*. He was a finalist in the 2020 NYACP Story Slam and is working on a book-length work of non-fiction about how patients find meaning in illness. Learn more about his work at adamlalley.com and [@AdamLalley](https://twitter.com/AdamLalley) on Twitter.

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