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#227103

Notes From The Esophagus

The big tubuncular circulation fan sits alone;
spinning, churning, pushing gray dust motes
and jalapeno flavored hairballs on down the same
colored MDOC halls in summer.

This dull passage known as "the rock"
in correctional vocabularies is a throat
of constriction full of long and dull days.
Moving us with up and down reflexes;
our up and down moods, with up and down steps,
are always the same.
Before an up and down gulp releases.
Ah, peristalsis! They've swallowed some more!

Meanwhile, those tumble-weavers go bounding on;
rolling by the same shower-shoe shufflers scritch-scratching
their way across a galaxy of vanilla cheap tiles
with their cinderblock uncertainties.
They wonder, not wander, always:
What's on t.v. tonight? What's on the tray three times a day?
Those milk for juice trades make them wonder away.
Wondering if time does indeed make for a tasty tenderizer?
Or are they still raw, half-chewed chunks
on the way wayyy down?

For these saw-horse carpenters or card-counting cowboys
are really just measuring their red-lined boundaries
by wallowing on shelves;
by swallowing themselves;
becoming roast-beef-thin slices that are now lodged
down deep and stuck with tears in their eyes.
(the only running allowed on the rock!).
Unable to breathe, clutching their throats
through handcuffed Heimlich's double fist pumps,
so suddenly turn'd blue;
as now more wonders, for their long long whys?

MDOC -- Michigan Department of Corrections