

UC Merced

The Vernal Pool

Title

Written Test on Osteology

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6ff8v6m2>

Journal

The Vernal Pool, 5(1)

Author

Jurilla, Matthew

Publication Date

2018

DOI

10.5070/V351041858

Copyright Information

Copyright 2018 by the author(s). This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

Peer reviewed|Undergraduate

Written Test on Osteology
By Matthew Jurilla

What is osteology?

Osteology is the study of the skeletal system.

Describe the functions of the fifth cranial nerve and plantar nerves.

Pass.

What is the inferior maxillary bone?

Absolutely no idea.

Why am I taking a test on osteology on a Wednesday afternoon?

Well, I have an answer for that.

I've thought a lot about the human bone structure.

I always imagined that humans are a hospital

of false truths built on a framework of prayers
and held together by the broken wings of angels.

I thought that if I understood the human body
better, I would understand myself better,

like how I thought it'd be safe to drive on the freeway
of my own nervous system, but crashed headfirst

into the vertebrae of my self-worth. Or last Friday
morning when I dropped and cracked the coffee mug

that held my confidence, and the neurons of my fractured

brain couldn't figure out a way to keep it from leaking.

The person next to me is answering that the cranial nerve controls the muscles of mastication, and it's taking all the

muscles in my body to avoid copying because I've gotten used to copying the actions of others when I can't understand

who I am. But, here I am, trying to figure out who I am in a class where everyone seems to know me better than I do

because I've been labeled with a diagnosis I can't escape from. This is where I'm simply supposed to fail the test because

cheating will not solve being bipolar, failure is when I can't mute the volume of the voices echoing "cannots"

that are composed and sung by a choir of disappointments. I didn't copy. Rather, I'm pinching the opposite ends of the test

and ripping the pages. The professor, the class, the world, are looking at me because they thought they knew me,

because I have always been so good at being a whatever I was to everyone, but a stranger to myself. I'm a student labeled as

the ecstatic and depressed, the one hidden behind the heart of the class, the kid who believes that living is a condition

because the spine can only support so much when it's being ground into fine powder for depression to get high off of.

I've thought a lot about osteology, like how the vertebrae
comes together to shape highs and more lows. But I don't care

because victory is ripping up an osteology test to shreds, failing
in the most brilliant way possible, sprinting out the door,

and going home having to explain to my anxiety
I've realized I'm something more than bipolar.