

Diabetes

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the di- as in diabolic —
rooted in siphon
the slurp of syrup in the veins
a sludge-sweet sewage. A drain.

I say, call it a jellyfish with hidden stingers,
a sucking sea anemone, a Judas kiss.

My son calls it one-step-ahead fox —
stealth-bomber, keeping him off guard.
Omnivorous. Always hungry.
I say, call it a four-square meal
of vigilance.

Call it a late-night horror show
whose theme prayer is *if I should die
before I wake ...*

I've read about the dead dogs,
and the children, starved.
So many experiments —

One mother hates the dying sound of it,
wants a word that stands-up-proud-
on-a-protest sign.
Call it *Rosewater*, a sugar-baby lullaby,
the sourness buried in mounds
of test strips, phenol's tarry smell,
and a bee-shot sting.

All right, call it Tenacious D, mock rocker
turned metal God strutting up and down
a honeyed tightrope, and

call insulin the island queen of soul,
blood sister, your rumba, salsa,
tango partner,
the one who lets you dip
but not fall.

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