

Poem

Study of the small structure possessing great power

(title of a David Smith sculpture)

The body knows how to mourn while the mind
keeps lists and answers mail and makes
a hair appointment. Asks the waiter what's
inside the dim sum at the next table.

The body wants to sit on a low stool, speak
only when spoken to, and allow a seven-day
river of memories and tears to wash it clean
but the mind won't allow this,
the mind thinks it can run forever
so here I am, without my father a month now,
on and off planes, speaking more than spoken to,
checking something else off the list
as the dam in my throat closes and my voice
disappears, the voice I depend on,
the body shutting down the blind machine.

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