

## Backache

For Lynn

Branching needles flare from my miraculous spine  
like unbidden barrio gunfights they imprison me.  
I cower supine in cartilage tenements and twisty sheets  
as muscular gangs rumble, veer, and joust behind me.  
“We got you hostage”, they sneer, “we’ll prooove it”  
as ligaments calve and raft into articulated seizure.  
Panting grimly, curdled, I imagine healing stratagems.  
Of batons engineered to coax fey bones into obedience,  
choreographed to hypnotize barking aches. Of hands to  
loosen spanners that torque dry joints and grit jaw.  
Of potions to dissolve my warped calcareous loom,  
and leave my weft of soft tissue and baby’s breath.

St. Martin d’Uriage, France

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