BODY OF PERSPECTIVE:

Write the poem from the point of view of [one of] the image[s] (directly or indirectly), or perhaps have multiple images in conversation with each other (literally or tangentially).

Imagine what the body/body part is doing or is about to do, and flesh out (pun intended) this scenario.

Incorporate some of the contextual language in the poem in a surprising way [for example, describe the weather using the anatomical wordage, or another sensory experience (taste, smell, touch, etc.)].
The Pope's Penis

It hangs deep in his robes, a delicate clapper at the center of a bell.
It moves when he moves, a ghostly fish in a halo of silver seaweed, the hair swaying in the dark and the heat—and at night, while his eyes sleep, it stands up in praise of God.

SHARON OLDS
homage to my hips

BY LUCILLE CLIFTON

these hips are big hips
they need space to
move around in.
they don’t fit into little
petty places. these hips
are free hips.
they don’t like to be held back.
these hips have never been enslaved,
they go where they want to go
they do what they want to do.
these hips are mighty hips.
these hips are magic hips.
i have known them
to put a spell on a man and
spin him like a top!

Lucille Clifton, “homage to my hips” from Good Woman. Copyright © 1987 by Lucille Clifton. Reprinted with the permission of Curtis Brown, Ltd.

Source: Good Woman (BOA Editions Ltd., 1987)
Skin

Back then it seemed that wherever a girl took off her clothes
the police would find her—
in the backs of cars or beside the dark night ponds, opening
like a green leaf across
some boy’s knees, the skin so taut beneath the moon
it was almost too terrible,
too beautiful to look at, a tinderbox, though she did not know.
But the men who came
beating the night rushes with their flashlights and thighs—
they knew. About Helen,
about how a body could cause the fall of Troy and the death
of a perfectly good king.
So they read the boy his rights and shoved him spread-legged
against the car
while the girl hopped barefoot on the asphalt, cloaked
in a wool rescue blanket.
Or sometimes girls fled so their fathers wouldn’t hit them,
their legs flashing as they ran.
And the boys were handcuffed just until their wrists had welts
and let off half a block from home.

God for how many years did I believe there were truly laws
against such things,
laws of adulthood: no yelling out of cars in traffic tunnels,
no walking without shoes,
no singing any foolish songs in public places. Or else
they could lock you in jail
or condemn your self and soul by telling both your lower-
and uppercase Catholic fathers.

14 from The Body Mutinies
And out of all these crimes, unveiling the body was of course
the worst, as though something
about the skin's phosphorescence, its surface as velvet
as a deer's new horn,
could drive not only men but civilization mad, could lead us
to unspeakable cruelties.
There were elders who from experience understood these things
much better than we.
And it's true: remembering I had that kind of skin does drive me
half-crazy with loss.
Skin like the spathe of a broad white lily
on the first morning it unfurls.
Shea Butter Manifesto

We, the forgotten Delta people,
the dry riverbed people,
hair calling always for rain,
skin turned skyward wishing for clouds,
we stand for blood.
We kneel for water.
For oil, we lay down,
fingers spread, as if in this way
we might skate across the yellow clay of it all
like lagoon insects.

So it is written:
heal yourself, baby.
With the tree and the touch, with the turmeric.
In this world, nothing brittle prevails,
so in this world, greese is a compliment,
no, it's a weapon,
no, it's a dream you had, where it was cold
and your mother, seeing the threat of gray at your elbows
and knowing that ash is the language of the dead
kneel, and put her hands on your face like this
and anointed you a protected child, a hot iron in a place of frost.
Recall this, and
fear no thickness.
Be resurrected, glistening in the story of you.
Be shining.

Eve L. Ewing
Large Intestine

Look in the mirror. Let us both look.
Here is my naked body.
Apparently you like it,
I have no reason to.
Who bound us, me and my body?
Why must I die
together with it?
I have the right to know where the borderline
between us is drawn.
Where am I, I, I myself?

Belly, am I in the belly? In the intestines?
In the hollow of the sex? In a toe?
Apparently in the brain. I do not see it.
Take my brain out of my skull. I have the right
to see myself. Don’t laugh.
That’s macabre, you say.

It’s not me who made
my body.
I wear the used rags of my family,
an alien brain, fruit of chance, hair
after my grandmother, the nose
glued together from a few dead noses.
What do I have in common with all that?
What do I have in common with you, who like
my knee, what is my knee to me?

Surely
I would have chosen a different model.

I will leave both of you here,
my knee and you.
Don’t make a wry face, I will leave you all my body
to play with.
And I will go.
There is no place for me here,
in this blind darkness waiting for
corruption.
I will run out, I will race
away from myself.
I will look for myself
running
like crazy
till my last breath.

One must hurry
before death comes. For by then
like a dog jerked by its chain
I will have to return
into this stridently suffering body.
To go through the last
most strident ceremony of the body.

Defeated by the body,
slowly annihilated because of the body
I will become kidney failure
or the gangrene of the large intestine.
And I will expire in shame.
And the universe will expire with me,
reduced as it is
to a kidney failure
and the gangrene of the large intestine.

[ANTONIA'S LOVE]

I'll Open the Window

Our embrace lasted too long.
We loved right down to the bone.
I hear the bones grind, I see
our two skeletons.

Now I am waiting
till you leave, till
the clatter of your shoes
is heard no more. Now, silence.

Tonight I am going to sleep alone
on the bedclothes of purity.
Aloneness
is the first hygienic measure.
Aloneness
will enlarge the walls of the room,
I will open the window
and the large, frosty air will enter,
healthy as tragedy.
Human thoughts will enter
and human concerns,
misfortune of others, saintliness of others.
They will converse softly and sternly.

Do not come anymore.
I am an animal
very rarely.
Right HAND

from the radial side

Annular ligament of wrist
Tendon of ext. carpi radialis brevis
Tendon of ext. carpi radialis longus
Tendon of ext. pollicis longus
Tendons of ext. digitorum (communs)
Dorsal interosseous I
Metacarpal II

Position of styloid process of radius
Tendon of abd. pollicis longus
Tendon of ext. pollicis brevis
Tabatière ('snuff box')
Base of metacarpal III
Thenar eminence
Abd. pollicis brevis
Phalanx I of thumb
Add. pollicis
Thumb
Skin
Sheath for index finger tendons
Fat pads of finger
Index

Nail

Observations—(1) Associate THenar (eminence) with THumb. (2) First dorsal interosseous prominent between thumb and index finger. (3) Pit called ‘snuff box’ [tabatière] lies at root of thumb between tendons of long and short extensors of thumb. (4) Process of radius prominent on thumb side of wrist. (5) Long extensor tendon of thumb converges above toward index-finger tendon, but does not meet it.
The **TEETH** and **TONGUE**

**TEETH**

Rooted in the dental arch of each jawbone of the adult are 16 teeth. Their **crowns** are the only visible parts, emerging from the **gum**—a reddish, fleshy membrane that surrounds the necks of the teeth. Most upper teeth are larger than lower teeth. They overbite the lower set and are nearly always the more exposed of the two. Front teeth expand laterally, more above than below. This establishes a bite arrangement such that upper teeth, to the rear, are set a little behind their lower companions. The **cutters**, in front, terminate in chisel-edges. On one side of a jaw they consist of 2 flat incisors and 1 pointed canine (eyetooth). The **upper medial incisor** is far larger than the lateral, and the **lower medial incisor** is smallest of all. An **upper canine** has an angular edge—shorter in front than behind. A **lower canine** is blunt and longer than its counterpart above. The **grinders**, at the rear, consist of 2 premolars and 3 molars. **Premolars** are small, slightly pointed in the upper jaw, and more blunt in the lower jaw. The larger **molars** have an appearance of being double premolars, and they decrease to the rear in size. **Molars** of the lower jaw are larger than their companions above.

**Deciduous or MILK TEETH** are the diminutive forerunners of the larger, permanent teeth. **Incisors** and **canines** correspond to those of the permanent set; the remaining teeth are **milk molars**, two on each side of each jaw. The approximate date of eruption for each tooth in the infant and the adult is shown on the opposite page. One has only to remember that, at about six years of age, the permanent first molar erupts behind the milk molars.

**TONGUE**

The shape of the tongue corresponds closely to that of the lower dental arch, by which it is bounded. Running from tip to root in the center of the upper surface is the **median furrow**. Generally in seclusion, the tongue may at times assist the agents of facial expression by its mobility. Among the attitudes in which it may be involved are prankishness, aversion, and apprehension.

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1 Illustrations, pp. 14-18.
2 Black races show a tendency to large teeth, white races to small teeth, yellow races to an intermediate size.
3 See note (n.s.), p. 214.
JOINTS of the Right WRIST

Radius

Ulna

Head of ulna (in ulnar notch of radius)

Groove for tendon of ext. carpi ulnaris muscle (q.v.)

Styloid process

Interval between ulnar head and wristbones

Little-finger-side spur of wrist

Pisiform

Hook of hamate

Metacarpal V

Heads of metacarpals

Wrinkled joint of little finger

Creased joint of little finger

Sesamoid bones

Phalanx I (proximal)

Phalanx II (distal)

Phalanx II (median)

Phalanx III (distal)

Interphalangeal joints

below and below
COMPENSATION OF THRUST

The effect of gravity on an upright column is static. If the column is bent sufficiently far from its base, it will fall. But balance may be recaptured by opposing one thrust with another—that is, by bending the column back upon itself. We may call this compensation of thrust, a principle demonstrated so patently in the human figure.
Deep fascia (white lines) is here seen infiltrating among the muscles for which it provides tough sheathing. Superficial fascia, with its fatty elements, is a thick, pliable, outer jacket. It holds the skin in place by many fibrous threads.
ELEVATION OF UPPER LIP
AGENT: Quadratus labii superioris (esp. angular head).
Raising of upper lip follows perception of something offensive, indicates that retching is induced.

CURLING OF UPPER LIP
AGENT: Quadratus labii superioris (esp. infraorbital and zygomatic heads), zygomaticus.
A snarl presages the fight, defiantly lifting one side of upper lip to display canine tooth—dangerous weapon of Man’s progenitors.

EVERSION OF LOWER LIP
AGENT: Quadratus labii inferioris, mentalis, orbicularis oris.
Rolling out of lower lip is associated with real or pretended seriousness and with partly inhibited feelings of grief.

PROTRUSION OF BOTH LIPS
AGENT: Orbicularis oris, mentalis.
Related to the making of appropriate sound, this shape of mouth may be cue to state of enraged rancor.

Observations—Nasolabial furrow and creases below eyelid sharp when pushed up by upper lip. Mentolabial furrow sharp under pressure of lower lip; accentuates rounded pillars from jaw to lower lip. Nostrils expand with sharp nasolabial furrow, contract with protrusion of upper lip. Lower lip full and smooth when rolled outward, thinner and corrugated when stiffly projected outward.
Right FOOT

from the inner (tibial) side

from the outer (fibular) side

Obervations—(1) Bony knobs of ankle: High Inside (HI), Low Outside (LO). (2) Peroneal tendons turn pulley-fashion behind outer knob of ankle; tendons of tibialis posterior and long flexor of toes turn similarly behind inner knob of ankle; both groups separated from calf tendon by triangular hollow loaded with fat. (3) Short extensor of toes evident as triangular lump in front of outer knob of ankle. (4) Tuberosity of 5th metatarsal near surface on outer border; navicular and big-toe metatarsal head prominent on inner border.