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Talk
William Matthews

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TALK

The body is never silent. Aristotle said that we can't hear the music of the spheres because it is the first thing that we hear, blood at the ear. Also the body is brewing its fluids. It is braiding the rope of food that moors us to the dead. Because it sniffsles and farts, we love the unpredictable. Because breath goes in and out, there are two of each of us and they distrust each other. The body's reassuring slurps and creaks are like a dial tone: we can always call up the universe. And so we are always talking. My body and I sit up late, telling each other our troubles. And when two bodies are near each other, they begin talking in body-sonar. The art of conversation is not dead! Still, for long periods, it is comatose. For example, suppose my body doesn't get near enough to yours for a long time. It is disconsolate. Normally it talks to me all night: listening is how I sleep. Now it is truculent. It wants to speak directly to your body. The next voice you hear will be my body's. It sounds the same way blood sounds at your ear. It is saying *Sshhh*, now that we, at last, are silent.