Ecdysis

New Latin, from Greek ekdysis act of getting out, from ekdyein to strip, from ex- + dyein to enter.

Dissection Instructions

1. Place the frog in the dissecting pan ventral side up.

2. Use scissors to lift the abdominal muscles away from the body cavity. Cut along the midline of the body from the pelvic to the pectoral girdle.

3. Make transverse (horizontal) cuts near the arms and legs.

4. Lift the flaps of the body wall and pin back.

*If your specimen is a female, the body may be filled with eggs and an enlarged ovary. You may need to remove these eggs to view the organs.

Locate each of the organs:

Fat Bodies—Spaghetti-shaped structures that have a bright

You'd expect counting:
100, 99, 98, 97

but no, no numbers just a mask

the smell of plastic of shower curtain

of chemical like airplane air

Deep breaths.

It was a time before this time.

Trees everywhere. Running streams.

Gods, creatures, the whole nine yards.

She ate abundantly.

Apples, figs, especially almonds and chocolate, the good stuff, wrapped in French paper, a gift from the gods.

But when she loved a man who didn't love her she ate everything in sight.

First she gorged on apples then figs—fruits on trees, shrubs, vegetables greening on vines.

She cracked all the almonds, the salted and not, and ate every pistachio even though she didn't like them.
orange or yellow color (if you have a particularly fat frog, these fat bodies may need to be removed).

**Peritoneum**—A spider web-like membrane that covers many of the organs.

**Liver**—The largest structure of the body cavity. This brown colored organ is composed of three parts, or lobes.

**Heart**—At the top of the liver, the heart is a triangular structure.

**Lungs**—Locate the lungs by looking underneath and behind the heart and liver. They are two spongy organs.

**Gall Bladder**—A small green sac under the liver.

**Stomach**—Curving underneath the liver is the stomach. Frogs swallow their meals whole.

Who knew dry could be like pain, like hell?

Water, please?

No, no water,

But ice chips,

yes,

and a pink sponge swab

like heaven

like sucking on

the smallest knob of life.

No, no nausea. Tired, yes and fuzzy, so much fuzz.

It’s the sticky disk behind my ear making me dry, keeping me from heaving.

More ice, please?

She plucked tomatoes, pulled potatoes, no cooking—

no thinking—fished all the fish from the sea.

She dovored clouds and drank the sky.

Creatures fled.

She gorged on chocolate, ate it all in one sitting, even the gilded French paper.

Her hunger kept growing.

She began to eat her feelings:

Sadness, sorrow, hate, and fear.

Envy, jealousy, hope.

She even ate the love for the man who didn’t love her.

She could no longer move, but rolled, ungracefully, along the ground.
**Pyloric Sphincter Valve**—
Regulates the exit of digested food from the stomach to the small intestine.

**Small Intestine**—Leading from the stomach.

**Large Intestine**—Also known as the cloaca, the last stop before wastes, sperm, or urine exit the body. ("Cloaca" means sewer.)

**Spleen**—Dark red spherical, a holding area for blood.

**Esophagus**—The tube leading from the mouth to the stomach.

**Removal of the Stomach:**
Cut the stomach out of the frog and open it up.

You may find what remains of the frog's last meal.

Look at the texture of the stomach on the inside.

What did you find in the stomach? Write it down.

And the nurse feeds me chips, one, then two, like a baby

A crab found her—
he had escaped (claimed he tasted bad).
He was not kind:

* * *

The surgeon listens, looks, asks then writes.

Four small sutures, slashes on my belly—a fifth larger one that, yes, hurts.

The x-rays show the band, like a belt at the top of my stomach, barium fluid flowing as it should.

And we review directions: Liquids only. Soft food later—in two weeks.

And we asked directions:
Anything strange, I ask, while you were poking around?

No, he says, flipping, scanning tightly typed pages. Remarkably unremarkable.

You’re bursting at the seams, he said. Hideous.

And she knew it was true.

And she thought she didn’t care, but she did.

She wanted to notice the world around her—

She asked the crab how he did it—his hard exterior and nimble legs.

She wanted to notice the world around her—

She asked the crab how he did it—his hard exterior and nimble legs.

Low to the ground, he said, and I regularly reinvent myself.

And he taught her the secret, of growing within, of shedding the old, beat up skin.

She called herself Ecdysis. Slowly, she renewed.