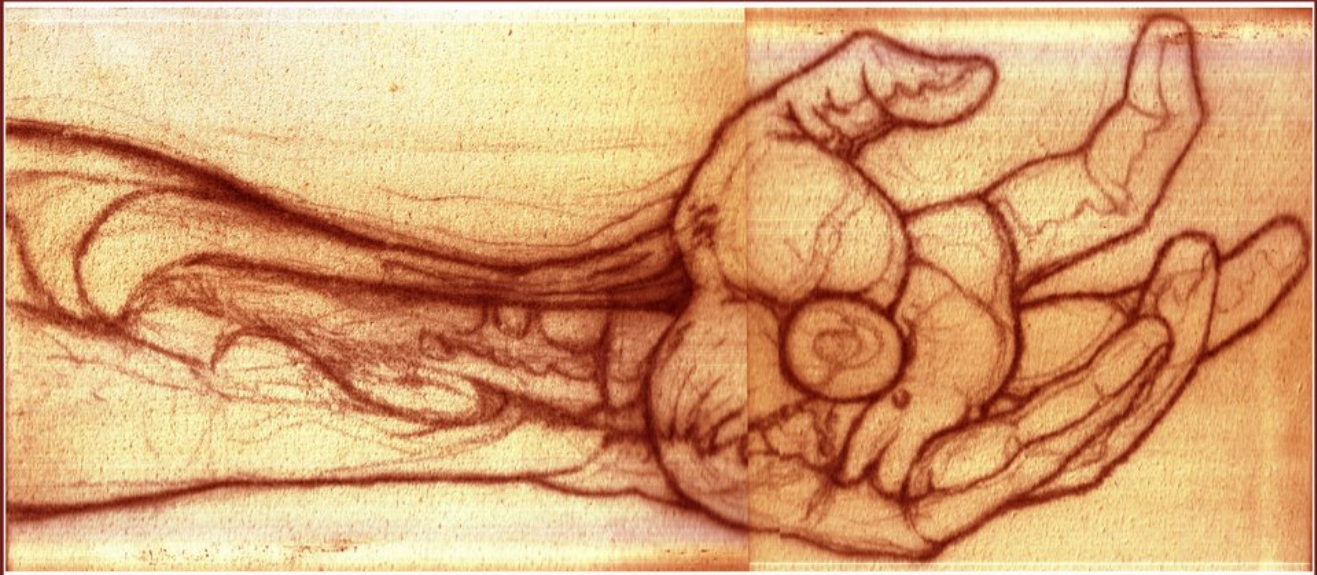


[Why I Shouldn't Worry So Much](#) [1]

May 6, 2019 [Featured Poetry](#) [2]

[Disabled Poets Take on...](#) [3]

Poem by Lisa Rhodes-Ryabchich



Why I Shouldn't Worry So Much

I don't think, "I'm getting younger."
I'm getting blacker: legs darkened
by age, a thigh burn from spilling a
scalding teacup from the microwave
without a glove that may not have fit.
Wise fingers like wheat bread
toasted with a greasy layer of
I Can't Believe It's Not Butter!, and
veins plumped from Lipitor, now easy
to pry off the bone.

If your artery and veins are interconnected
by an *arteriovenous fistula*,
you may have an arm of valleys
and slopes, bulging prominently
from sloppy dialysis technicians,
poking you numerous times.

Why I Shouldn't Worry So Much

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If your veins say, *drink from me*,
your life will never run out.
Easy access is success every day
of the week, even on holidays,
when nobody is working in the hospital,
and when your newly graduated
medical interns are looking to make it
out the door, to the after-parties.
Hopefully, not after getting you
to your afterlife.

Being fat around the tummy
means you might be a runner-up
for type 2 diabetes.
Being lazy and never exercising
is like waiting for a heart attack
to come waltzing onto your plane,
into your life, onto your job,
into your condo, into your mind.
But now that I'm in shape, I can finally unwind.

Art Infomation

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Lisa Rhodes-Ryabchich is an English instructor with University of the People and the author of *Opening the Black Ovule Gate* (Finishing Line Press, 2018) and *We Are Beautiful Like Snowflakes* (Finishing Line Press, 2016). She has an MFA from Sarah Lawrence College and was a recipient of a Martha's Vineyard Creative Writing Fellowship in 2016. Her poems have appeared in *The Chaffey Review*, *Poetry Leaves Exhibition* 2019, *Ancient Pathways*, *Nothing Substantial*, *Epiphanies and Late Realizations of Love*, *Remembered Arts Journal*, *Breadcrumbs Magazine*, *Greed 7 Deadly Sins*, *I AM STRENGTH*, *Medical Literary Messenger*, *Literary Nest*, *Writers*

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Page 2 of 3

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Café Magazine, *The Moon* magazine, *Destigmatized Anthology*, [Praxis Magazine](#) [6], *Gather Round*, *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, and elsewhere.

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