

my brain and
heart divorced
a decade ago
over who was
to blame about
how big of a mess
I have become
eventually,
they couldn't be
in the same room
with each other
now my head and heart
share custody of me
I stay with my brain
during the week
and my heart
gets me on weekends
they never speak to one another
- instead, they give me
the same note to pass
to each other every week
and their notes they
send to one another always
says the same thing:
"This is all your fault"
on Sundays
my heart complains
about how my
head has let me down
in the past
and on Wednesday
my head lists all
of the times my
heart has screwed
things up for me
in the future
they blame each
other for the
state of my life
there's been a lot
of yelling - and crying
so,
lately, I've been
spending a lot of
time with my gut

who serves as my
unofficial therapist

most nights, I sneak out of the
window in my ribcage

and slide down my spine
and collapse on my
gut's plush leather chair
that's always open for me

~ and I just sit sit sit sit
until the sun comes up

last evening,
my gut asked me
if I was having a hard
time being caught
between my heart
and my head

I nodded

I said I didn't know
if I could live with
either of them anymore

"my heart is always sad about
something that happened yesterday
while my head is always worried
about something that may happen tomorrow,"
I lamented

my gut squeezed my hand

"I just can't live with
my mistakes of the past
or my anxiety about the future,"
I sighed

my gut smiled and said:

"in that case,
you should
go stay with your
lungs for a while,"

I was confused
- the look on my face gave it away

"if you are exhausted about
your heart's obsession with
the fixed past and your mind's focus
on the uncertain future

your lungs are the perfect place for you

there is no yesterday in your lungs
there is no tomorrow there either

there is only now
there is only inhale

there is only exhale
there is only this moment
there is only breath
and in that breath
you can rest while your
heart and head work
their relationship out."

this morning,
while my brain
was busy reading
tea leaves

and while my
heart was staring
at old photographs

I packed a little
bag and walked
to the door of
my lungs

before I could even knock
she opened the door
with a smile and as
a gust of air embraced me
she said

"what took you so long?"

John Roedel