Transcortical Sensory Aphasia Sonnet: What Happens When Your Words Are Not Your Own?

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Abstract: A sonnet about transcortical sensory aphasia, a disorder in which comprehension remains intact, but language production is primarily constrained to repetition. Much like the mythical Echo, this sonnet is a reflection upon personal expression when one’s words are not one’s own.

A ruddy clot, thick, viscous as fresh mud
gets lodged within brain vessel. Language lobe,
its thirst not slaked, vampiric quest for blood,
succumbs, and like the emperor disrobed,

a naked stream of consciousness pours out.
To comprehend: impaired; intact is just
repeating. Lonely Echo parrots shouts
and whispers in a narcissistic quest

to claim what’s left of her expression, half-
life lived in mimicked bursts of phrases,
forme fruste of language, thwarted, sometimes graphic

words, obscenities can take the place

of speech. When all expression is but loaned,
what happens when your words are not your own?
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