The Body Factory

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THE BODY FACTORY

Donnie Drobny

There is a factory of whitewashed stone
That life and death both call home
With broken windows and dark smoke stacks
Towering above rusted railroad tracks.
A sign outside, under dirt and grime,
Declares ‘Body Factory’ along with the time
Which forever stands at 12 O’clock.
Now walk through the door, grab a white smock
And lets take a tour and finally see
The place that made you, the place that made me.

Here look, inside each of these bins
See the arms and legs, wrists to shins.
Inside small wooden crates, lined up in rows
Are thousands of teensy tiny little toes
And here are the heads and there are the rears
Here is the blood and in here lay the tears
In each wooden box and every basket
Lay something belonging soon to the casket
From outsides like hair or your fingernails
To the parts we don’t see like slimy entrails
Yet in this warehouse of body parts
You will not find a carton of hearts

Hearts are installed much deeper inside
After the mind and with much more pride
But here we can see the belts and chutes
Where bodies are assembled with skintight suits
Robotic arms placing heads
Tying them on with tendon threads
Torsos twisting to fit in hips
And tiny pumps inflating lips
Finally filled with every part
Except the programmed brain and holy heart.

Next we have, with newly straightened spines
Dozens of finished bodies neatly in lines
And on each face, behind every eye
Not a single great thought or despondent sigh.
These bodies are perfect in every way
Without human consciousness to lead them astray
The next step is installing the mind
Some naturally crude still others refined
But each placed with precision and care
And covered with varying degrees of hair

In this room, white walled and sterile
They slowly remove all instincts feral
And add instead the proper response to
Ordinary questions like “how do you do?”
Each will respond in their own way
But each will have the same thing to say
“I’m well, and you?”
And each time it will be only partially true
For every mind is programmed alike
Not to truly say what they feel like

But here, finally, is the holy room
The room in which we can only assume
Holds the installation of the final part
Where inside the chest they place the heart
The first beat starts the whole machine
And each succeeding one pounds soft and clean
Declaring life, and the certainty of death
And forcing the body to take its primary breath
Without this final piece, which feels love and pain
A mere shell this body will remain.