

Kristina Tester  
A different dissection

Grant's Dissector instructs a rigidity in the teaching of Anatomy. Know the muscle, recite origin, insertion, innervation. Describe Action. The body becomes the parts list, the student the master of recitation, rote memorization and fact regurgitation.

Here is another parts list.

Muscle: Supraspinatus, Origin: Fossa of scapula.

Action: lifted four children and sixteen grandchildren countless times, spinning them in the air, placing them on shoulders to see the world, helping them reach higher, stretch farther, grow taller.

Ligament: Anterior Cruciate Ligament. Insertion: lateral condyle of femur.

Action: barely held together a knee bruised and battered by high school hockey, collegiate soccer and explorations through backyards, on bicycles and by backpack. Torn by a game of thanksgiving football because saying no was never an option.

Joint: Temporal Mandibular. Location: between squamous portion of temporal bone and condyle.

Action: held his jaw shut when she smashed the Subaru, when they lost the offer on the house, when they told him they "no longer had a place for him at the company". Opened his jaw: every Sunday night football game, every soccer game in the fan section, and every piano recital, even when cheering wasn't allowed.

Gland: Lacrimal. Innervation: parasympathetic from CN VII.

Action: only the memorable moments. Walking his daughter down the aisle. Carrying his wife's casket down that same aisle. Running to the hospital when they thought the baby was breach. Saying hello to life, and saying goodbye to it.

Muscle: Iris Dilator. Innervation: sympathetic from superior cervical ganglion.

Action: never knew what true clarity was until these muscles brought her into focus. Every inch of her glowing and focused in front of him, for 55 years.

Organ: Lung. Location: pleural cavity.

Action: breaths... deep ones of solitude, alone in the mountains. Ragged ones after a fight ...or sex... or fear... Short ones: towards the end.

Bone: Malleus. Location: inner ear.

Action: listened. To worries, to stories around the fireplace and laughter at the dinner table, to patients, to son-in-law's, to friends who quit jobs and friends who started families. To MPR every morning and *A Prairie Home Companion* every Sunday. To her voice, every day, with "good morning", "I love you" and "goodnight. "

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Organ: Heart. Location: pericardial space.

Action: beat for 82 years, 30,000 days, for four children, sixteen grandchildren, and – always--  
for her.

In our dissection, let us not forget the forest for the trees.