

INFLECTION

An embryonic poem cold-nosed my spine,  
sniffed each vertebra, moved around  
like it was playing a keyboard.  
Good stuff, fresh  
from a high-placed synapse.  
Surprising it would seep  
into my musings, willing to settle  
for an uncelebrated instrument.  
Billy Collins must be out of reach.

I scratch an idle itch on my hand,  
waiting for it to nudge me again--  
no, hit me, inject me. In the gut  
or the heart. Not that preoccupied pump  
centered between two lungs, not that  
mawkish condition purpling  
drunken songs and birthday cards.

I want to contract a fullblown case:  
The fever, inflamed nerve, the red rash.  
A fingernail quiets the corporeal itch  
but the condition clamors for attention.  
A vacancy squirms to be filled,  
colonized, overwhelmed, never cured.

Where does the germ come from? Where  
does it go? I'm infected; I felt the sting.  
Yet it's not unwelcome. I'll wait  
without antidotes for its full development.  
Even if it's the slow-incubating sort  
I'll almost die of.

*Exquisite!*

*yes! Maggie*

--Glenna Holloway