

To Tell You About My Voice

I earn medicine by acting like a virus
Swells my vocal cords and makes a man
And his lungs rub themselves
Together raspy, and I speak
Like I'm not high-
Strung so that my pitch's stable.
My voice through the phone must
Implode the zeroes and ones
Of their machine; the fan an air-
Plane engine, their keyboard feet
On hot coals that give up and stay
To bone; requires a male to sacrifice
Oneself to the binary? Once,
I used my natural voice. I was questioned
Halfway through scheduling my appointment,
Who are you seeing and how are you
Today over, when the tech asks, who am I
Speaking with? I say Prince,
And I think the confusion's with Prince,
But there are certain things you know
To be certain, you say, I have here that Prince
Is a male—where? I don't recall
Naming myself, but I enter the binary
To tell you about my voice: I go to purgatory
And wait with who, I can only guess,
Are other people deemed non-
Compliant, and am I to be
Deciding who to be on the phone;
This is the opposite of ghost; I
Am strapped to a pipe organ
And must know the ranks, the control
Of wind to extent of wood and metal
And play with mouth and tongue,
Or I don't, and then there's no
Sound, air, or hold music.