Flying Inside Your Own Body

By Margaret Atwood

Your lungs fill & spread themselves,
wings of pink blood, and your bones,
empty themselves and become hollow.

When you breathe in you’ll lift like a balloon
and your heart is too light & too huge,
beating with pure joy, with pure helium.
The sun’s white winds blow through you,
there’s nothing above you,
you see the earth now as an oval jewel,
radiant & seablue with love.
It’s only in dreams you can do this.
Waking, your heart is a shaken fist,
a fine dust clogs the air you breathe in;
the sun’s a hot copper weight pressing straight
down on the think pink rind of your skull.
It’s always the moment before the gunshot.
You try & rise but you cannot.