

Quoth the Student

By Vincent Chan

Once upon a mid-day dreary, while I pondered of pulmonary,
Over many a curious volume of begotten lore,
While I sat there, mostly snacking, suddenly I felt a tapping,
As if something gently cracking, cracking inside my cranial floor.
"Tis my physiology," I muttered, " cracking inside my cranial floor -
Only this, and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember oxygen at a high percent,
And each ascending millimeter that went, wrought its damage upon infants premature.
Eagerly I thought of atelectasis;- mainly the effect when gas displaces
Absorption due to pressure graces- graces taught by S. Osborne-
For the lung and heart-wise woman whom the scientists call Osborne-
Name remembered, for evermore.

And the hyperbaric healing, of oxygen by increasing,
 $P_{\text{I}}\text{O}_2$; were ways unknownst before;
So that now, to still the racing of my head, I started pacing,
"Tis my physiology reeking havoc inside my cranial floor-
Just my physiology reeking havoc inside my cranial floor;-
That was it, and nothing more."

Presently my memory though of grieving, for the mice involved in liquid breathing,
Who had not 100% "O-two" – nor 8000 Pascals for-ti-tude.
But, truly, thought I, solubility was poor,
Inherently, what saline lacking; fluorocarbons having,
And so quickly I felt a cracking, cracking inside my cranial floor
That I scarce remembered diving – I peered once again inside my cranial floor;
Sleepiness there, but nothing more.

And then I thought of the severe stresses, that diving sometimes impresses,
Depends on depth, duration; I never considered before,
Examples of these include, high pressure and sensations-crude,
And low gravity, which does exude - the name "Osborne"
This I repeated, and I echoed out the name "Osborne".
Merely this, and nothing more.

I remembered that for each 10m you descend, 1 atm barometric pressure does ascend,
And if gas cavities cannot amend; and equilibrate as before,
Then when diving, gases do expand, and you will be... never more
Then your lung, GI and sinus gases will expand and you will be ... never more.

So by reason, that's why divers exhale, or their pleural pressures will fail,
And pneumothorax will prevail; never being as ever before,
And decompression sickness, due to nitrogen's solution richness,
Depends on ascending quickness! I implore,
Don't ascend quickly! I implore.
Don't ascend quickly or you'll get the bends, I implore!

But before my mind could rest, I felt an urgency to address,
Nitrogen narcosis, a "50meters" depth psychosis,
And even greater depths will cause, coordination and consciousness flaws...
But after I addressed that clause, I took just a moment's pause...
Took a moment's pause – to peer inside my cranial floor,
And my soul from out that shadow that lies just on my cranial floor
I knew that after pulmonary, the old me was ... never more.

An adaptation of "Quoth the Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe (1845)