

# Forces

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Xx

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**Erratum**

Featured Poet

## Xx

Susan Blick

Featured Poet

The speaker is speaking  
about the scientific study of DNA sequencing.

From ethnographic field observations of ancestral populations spread over  
geographic regions they can determine if there are genetic variations that result in  
downstream problems.

My mind is wondering and wandering through  
I have my mother's eyes  
and her toes, her father's ears and when I took them  
My father's fingers and freckles  
his mother's nose and smile  
I am simply tiny parts of parts of people who are all  
If I knew I would get high blood pressure  
like my mother and my mother's father  
or have a heart attack like my father  
and my father's father or have an onset  
of inherited illness would my hope for my own life become  
Could I go on knowing my fate  
Would I remain the same or change  
Would I be a better person for it  
Would I be both happier and healthier  
or driven mad like Oedipus and gouge my sockets until  
Maybe if I knew when their parts  
would overtake my parts  
I wouldn't sit and wait for it  
Maybe I would live every day like an end  
being joyous and unafraid then smiling tell Death that  
In all these borrowed parts of parts  
is anything really mine  
except the acquired scars and the hair  
color that covers inherited gray  
How do you live life knowing that even at its best it is  
and you are roe in the downstream current  
The speaker is done speaking. She is asking for questions.

*Elizabeth Bishop's "The Fish"*  
*I caught a tremendous fish*  
*He didn't fight.*  
*He hadn't fought at all.*  
*He hung a grunting weight,*  
*battered and venerable*  
*and homely. Here and there*  
*his brown skin hung in strips*  
*like ancient wallpaper,*  
*and its pattern of darker brown*  
*stained and lost through age.*  
*He was speckled with barnacles,*  
*with tiny white sea-lice,*  
*While his gills were breathing in*  
*the terrible oxygen*  
*fresh and crisp with blood,*  
*I thought of the coarse white flesh*  
*the big bones and the little bones,*  
*and the pink swim-bladder*  
*I looked into his eyes*  
*I admired his sullen face,*  
*and the mechanism of his jaw,*  
*grim, wet, weaponlike,*  
*and a fine black thread*  
*when it broke and he got away.*  
*frayed and wavering,*  
*a five-haired beard of wisdom*  
*And I let the fish go.*