

THE BODY VARIATIONS

1.

The body is a motel named
"The Temple"

2.

It is a friend
whose changes pain you

You decide you were wrong about him

3.

A cardsharp
with the longest career in the west

Nobody
wants him arrested
Everybody loves him
Everybody loses
Everybody always
wants a new deck

4.

It is the trip
you planned too long

They tell you the weather has never
been this bad

5.

The body is a temple
where Shriners and other
conventioners with hats

besot themselves

They do not know what or when
they worship

But they do

Amen

6.
The body is the very famous person
you would love to meet

It turns out he lives on the floor below

But you never meet him

7.
A town of wine and cheese
not far from the spot
where a lost party stopped to sing its last hymns

8.
It is a writers' conference drowsy with advice

9.
A friend
who has lied about his past

Now you don't know what to believe

You realize
how alike you are

10.
The body is that extraordinary thing
you find at the dump
and take home
excited

Your wife
snorts at your folly
Your family and friends think you're a fool

When you lug it back
the dump has become an antique store
The owner
buys it for a staggering sum

They love you at home
because you are rich