

JEFF DOLVEN / Analysis

If you want to become a psychoanalyst
you'll have to undergo analysis,
and if there are no analysts around
for miles, or if, like Freud was, you're the first,
you'll simply have to analyze yourself.

Now just how widely should this law apply?
With teachers, the question mostly won't arise,
as they've been taught. With parents, we hope, ditto.
Your pilot probably took a plane as a child.
The con-man got his start by being conned.

Doctors, of course. And transplant surgeons?
A harder case, but let's not give up yet:
in training, for example, each could swap
some organ with a willing fellow student,
something expendable, like an appendix,
or kidney—kidneys you could even switch,
left one to the right and right to the left,
spare everyone the trouble of rejection.
The patient wakes and hardly feels the difference,
except for sleeping now on the other side.

Don't operate, however, on yourself.
(Is this where the analogy breaks down?)
Don't operate on yourself, or anyone
who's operating, even then, on you.
The analysts may analyze each other,

but never, by the book, at the same time.
Too much, too much, too much! Or not enough?
It's good, kissing the back of someone's knee,
and, in a different way, kissing a bruise or a scar,
and then there's kissing someone's lips, with yours.