

## **County Medical Examiners, The "Riggormortis Posthumous Muscular Rigidity"**

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The tepid carcass examinatately reclines on my table  
Its peculiar muscular activity, rigor mortis, works in  
my favor  
Determining PMI through rigid, bone-cracking means  
Postmortem rigidity occurs through the depletion of  
ATP...  
Adenosine triphosphate is required for muscle  
relaxation  
But metabolic activity continues after death and  
creates a reaction  
Lactid acid is spent and exhausts the store of  
glycogen  
Muscles go hard from the abnormal links between actin  
and myosin...  
This maturing stiff...  
Becomes quite stiff...  
Positioning the corpse can be quite a Herculean task  
As I bend the crepitating unmalleable limbs with  
revolting cracks  
Obstinate appendages stubbornly give way under my  
dragoon efforts  
My aching muscles are overtaxed and pushed well  
passed  
discomfort...  
...Paralytic legs, unflexing arms...  
...Carrion with all its frozen charm...  
...Unmoving torso, intractable neck...  
...Deplorable corpse a total wreck...  
Between 2 and 12 hours is the solidifying time  
required  
For abductors and adductors to become unyieldingly  
mired  
It will take a day for outstretched extremities to  
acquiesce  
Finally amenable to my adroit limb-wrenching finesse...  
The lampooning hu-mannequin's muscle proteins are  
devoured  
As the taciturn body achieves maximal rigor in 12  
hours  
12 hours more and the muscular fiber grudgingly give  
way

When the proteolytic enzymes in the lysosomes of  
muscle cells escape...  
...Corpse piquantly olid...  
...Now maceratedly flaccid...  
Barring rare cadaveric spasms, a PMI timeline can be  
mapped  
Factor in environmental variables and the effects they  
can have  
Ripening malodorous remains can speak from the  
grave  
And tell us their time of death by how their muscles  
behave...  
...Paralytic legs, unflexing arms...  
...Carrion with all its frozen charm...  
...Unmoving torso, intractable neck...  
...Deplorable corpse a total wreck...

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