

Oral tradition

In bed,
sucking and tonguing

a Halls Relief honey
lemon & menthol
cough drop.

Silicone earplugs,
snug to the undulations of my canal,
amplify the saliva squeaks and enamel clashes,
as it tumbles about the warm,
wet cave of my mouth.

But as in life,
I'm more cruncher than caresser,
and soon swap tongue for teeth;
glancing papillae for pounding molar,
splintering the citric glass into shards

that rake my throat,
and forces me to unwrap and pop in
yet another salving treat;

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fully aware that should I digest more than 8,500 cough drops
containing 10 mg of menthol in a short period of time,
I risk the chance of a lethal overdose*.

* The lethal dose of menthol is estimated to be roughly 1,000 mg (1 gram) per kilogram of body weight.