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this book paints a flowing picture of the relationship between life and nature through the evolution of a word physiology today it denotes a scientific discipline at the intersection of biology and medicine signifying the study of life yet physiology manifests a split personality in the course of history it came down to us from the ancient greeks where it represented the study of nature or natural philosophy the precursor of modern day science physiology originates from an older greek root physis meaning nature itself that stretches far back to the birth of greek thought how did this word generate two such disparate meanings what does this word tell us historically about humankind's grasp of the essence of nature and the essence of life and the interrelationship between the two the author follows an etymological path into the distant past in writing the biography of the word physiology the book delves into linguistic pre history in search of the primordially interwoven views of life and nature and the words that symbolized those views it tracks the evolving meaning of those words in western civilization across time space language and culture

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