

Block

*"To make beauty out of pain, it damns the eyes—
No, dams the eyes." - Dan Beachy-Quick*

Wincing under the weight of the dinosaur
Six months could pass without
Issue.

No word, not even a letter.
Is it dammed to hell somewhere?

Or

Did global warming stick a straw in me,
Take it up through the puckering ozone?

Check:

1. My tongue is parched and list-less
2. My index has gone printless

Three

Nights in a row my depths have been
Too arid to plumb.

The perpetual pinch kept
my eyes rolling in waking
but still in sleep.

Wincing under the weight of the dinosaur
Again, despite my best intentions.

I had that recurring nightmare
Again, I was making the bed and
despite my best interventions
I couldn't smooth the sheet

Don't catch what ails your house, they say
Studies suggest so much these days.

And so I creep up the street with a dent in my tail
Dreading the thorough woman and the zoom lens

I run in circles
I run off the page

I took that pill
I bound the way we were with the way we remember we were.

Why did they beige the building
once the color of sky?

And the hawk dives low, scattering the gulls
And the hawk dives low to whisper in my ear
Honey, what do you know of sky?

Fear

We wait for the ball to drop,
No, we wait like figurines
in a clay animation waiting for the ball to be lowered to us
by a hand in the sky
on a piece of orange thread.

We wait for another year to bring change
We make offerings to the calendar

And while we wait, the waves of the ocean are being drawn for us
by a diligent child scooting along on hands and knees
connecting each point to point with shaky graphite.

It occurs to me, to name it
but I dare not speak the name.

I wash my hair twice,
Lather rinse repeat
Lather rinse repeat--

Is that four times?
Is that me, reflected in the flesh of a prickly pear?
Do I escape one cactus snare just to reach for another?

It is amazing, the propensity we have to see ourselves in non-reflective surfaces.

Site

I entered the house on a drill bit.

I entered the house and installed semi-permanent fixtures.

I entered the house to pull a drawstring close around my small life. The world puckered around it. I centered the kitchen table on an antagonistic rug and awaited chairs.

I picked this house from a list but it picked me first. There were three eyes embedded in the walls when I entered. Three out of five eyes in the room blinked expectantly, the other two gaped. I picked up my belongings and carried myself across the threshold.

I look different to myself but the house sees me. It sees my lipstick and my shame. I pretend that it's just the wrong color lipstick but the eyes of the house raise their brows.

Two of the eyes are gray and the third is blue. The gray eyes have mile-long lashes. When I leave the house, two additional yellow eyes guard the door and the darkness.

You might feel strange in a house with eyes. You might wonder if the eyes record information about you as you drink day-old coffee. You might become aware that you neglected to clean the crack between the stove and the countertop.

But I have seen many houses. This house sees me.

“Learning to smile a certain way to disarm without appearing / vulnerable is drag. Learning to see how you are seen...” - Mindy Nettifee

This too, you must own

Today I bought a dress covered in chameleons
Like Pablo, I, too, was tired of being a man
I had wandered the post-festive, already consumed
Already devoured aisles
And having plucked the drooping,
Crepe-paper-after-the-party from the wall
It swelled like a second-wind balloon, it
Transformed on me playing dress-up
I traded up for chromatophores
I see how I am seen and raise the world \$29.98-plus-tax
Of forest green chiffon

Now feel drops coming:
Turn slick water-beaded yellow.
Feel psychology buzzwords fletched and flung:
Turn porcelain-white shoulder-to-shoulder front line, curving upward.
Feel scope zeroing in:
Turn red-ringed electric stove burner.
Feel pierced, distanced to the point of fringe, glossed-over:
Turn sequin-studded, catered-to queen.
See silver platter:
Turn flashing-in-the-hands-of-Judith.
See severed head:
Turn hydra,
Turn madman butterfly,
Turn reptile-clad iron woman.

Own the ways that you shift under gaze
Shift gaze back with 137 scaly hooded eyes.