

Urine Inmates—

your argiope spider is
peeing a thread of white
light

it's hard to be outdoors
& not use its
conveniently web-based
latrine.

meanwhile the sun

thinks: I want to donate

my subconscious

to your handmade
vertical hammock: will
your gods – verdant
photosynthetic
consumers – be willing
to absorb such blatant
acts of banana
generosity?

sure, responds the
banana spider politely
on behalf of the leaves.

NO! reply the leaves.
you will melt the smallest
outdoor prison in the
world. go away. we are
urine inmates. leave us
in the dark!

AND THEN ONE DAY

I tell her in our neighborhood we do
not drift like a lake. We compare
houses, her house and my house. Her
house looks like her eyes, a peacock.
And my house looks like a rabbit, and
my pink room is not roomy, couched
in the left ear. I invite her into my
rabbit house and we ascend the stairs.
Today, the house misbehaves and
whenever the ear flaps down, my
room folds itself in half and whenever
the house folds like that, I and the
peacock neighbor collapse like an
origami too. The woman in amoeba
blouse looks at me. Looks at me
thoroughly and carefully. Up & down.
Up & down like she is an elevator
shaft and I am a button or two above
ground level. She is looking at me,
looking at me only to assure herself
that she has indeed, indeed it is,

indeed left my taste bud at the end of
her street. Eventually, to support my
frame, she presses her index finger
into the wall of my back and I find
myself floating horizontally up with
her. We can only drift so far, a few
centimeters up, before we suspend
like a balloon as the triangles that
shape our bodies also anchor us
down. Frozen in space, she holds my
body next to her like a celebratory
birthday candle: green, yellow,
brown, blue.

TO CLIMB A FACE

to climb a face with a ladder
& when on top of the forehead
to hold it so that it's a makeshift bridge
& to lower the makeshift bridge
on the bridge of the nose
so that dream walks across the thin abyss
between a face & a face
when dream climbs the face
& ascends the forehead
dream holds dream like hands

The Enigmatic Demoiselle, Eloign

A crowd gathers at the opening paragraph
A crowd of words
Afraid to look at other words
For what they might see
The 't' in 'tenuous' is excited about the 't' in 'tampion'
We are wearing matching shoes
Words are fearful of their origins
One word will condemn another word
Or annihilate another completely
Lynch that man
That brisk fascist
Or remove that vixen
She doesn't belong in our elite
Class of linguistic nobility
Words gather and group themselves into families
Ones that share similar symmetries
Or think they would like to bring another member
One especially that doesn't belong here
Let me introduce you to the enigmatic demoiselle, *Eloign*
Please say hello. Welcome. Welcome
Social pressures and semantic infrastructure prevent words
From being individuals
Why can't I stay alone in an empty room?
Floating from one blank page into another
Some words are deliberately weak
Join a club. Being a member of many things
Happy to find themselves appearing in a maxim
Right here I won't become extinct
Or disappear into the past

Or get snatched away like a child in front of a bus stop
Words refuse to elucidate
Their clans of urgent meaning
After they kiss each other goodbye—
They disperse into a field of nonsense
Or into a cliché
Many words enter a queue
Collaborate with one another
To form an allegiance
Of melancholy
Many exist in nomadic tribes
Called The Sentences
Many prefer to live in a fragment
Refusing to tame their unruly insinuations
A few words remain sentient in a mansion
Gazing down at imposing height
At their aristocratic isolation
But before the god of elocution—
Words are merely nudes
In their veneer sense of homelessness

THE PAINTED NUDES

By then, the men were nudes
Their balls painted with thick coats of acrylic
Blue, red, green, white, yellow, black
They stood facing the oak wall
With time, their balls hardened
Became children with large crayons
They pressed their writing utensils
Against the smooth oak surface
Lowered their thighs, bent their knees
They wrote one crooked straight line
They stood straight up to study their new symbol
In some languages, it is the ninth letter of the alphabet
Before washing their balls at the sink
They dotted their i's.

By then, the women were nudes
Their pairs of breasts painted with thick coats of acrylic
Blue, red, green, white, yellow, black
They stood facing the oak wall
With time, their nipples hardened
Became two keystrokes of a typewriter
They pressed their writing instruments
Against the smooth oak surface
They leaned right at a 90 degree angle
Placing their hands on their right knees
They leaned forward, their keys made one stroke
They straightened their bodies to study their new symbol
Before washing their breasts at the sink
They whispered "colon" to mark the new era of their education.