

Poems

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The New Speciesism

Others limping along suggested I get in touch
with my inner animal, preferably one ordained before birth.

The questionnaire skewed toward mammals, verged
on speciesism—no tarantulas or sea anemone,

no egg-laying platypuses. Yet they said
it should come as a surprise, and be one

you've never consumed in the flesh
lest unwieldy nightmares spoil the adventure,

an effect observed in worms and anything ingrown,
Trojan implements downloading in the background.

Needless to say the paintings suffered.
First squirrel and antelope emerged in notorious cases

then goats on towering ridges above frozen gulches.
From there sublime composition collapsed

in centerization (cousin of cornerization), all in all
a wall-to-wall you-know-what-I-mean,

the unavailable threads of the hive mind
fallen in with pyramid sweat lodge operations

never heard from again, as if under
a spell, other donated lives to spin-offs.

Feel Free to Splash about Disturbing Patience

Sorry to keep you waiting, I was feeding the neon tetras.
If I forget they cut loud swathes of blue
teasing anemone raising the seabed in your typical global warming nightmare
where fish end up on shore and no one can sleep at night over the stench.
Now it all boils down to handfuls of medlar berries and Astragalus roots
and they help, though when I go all the way with angelica sinensis
I get asked about the missing time in my dreams
and it gets messy keeping stories straight.
We stop pretending to care, anyways just gassing up
facilitates sky patterns subject to detection along I-5,
ground speeds added to sealed envelopes
one day to make the glossies
or break up grand programs to pay off buddies
not even yours. Yet still with the day-to-day
possibilities of stepping out of my sedan
like a scientist toward his white jumper suit
in an airlock from which he drives away in a turquoise electric golf cart
to a room now faraway from notions of home,
deep underground, past bio-scans
under cameras concentrating on the filtered and hygienic
machinery, our boys busy giving it their all
to avoid outsourcing, shopping on faith.
The trick is in the theme music,
so phrases throw no one
before the package is packaged, keeping 'em at it,
full in a barreling rhythm
so the inertia snares them as them
at its peak with everyone falling away on cue for the shift.