

Beatrice Lazarus

Break of Day

Sun-scored curtains made us yellow that morning.
Squinting, we feigned fatigue, our faces laced in
humdrum when we wanted passion flowers and birdsong,
the moist heat of shine-underside of scrubbed –
the mirror of our bodies wide and curved, reaching
out of ourselves, reflecting without robes or reasons,
waiting to be seen.

Morning is a house of gold
glass. A fire held against clapboard and mullion,
casting certain shadows on the wall.
Yellow a fear we cannot outgrow, hinged to the rib
of original sin – scarred loop right side, left side –
our hearts' fragile garden
guarded by gates of bone.

When did we spin into mist, wake to storms
instead of sunrise? All those allures
untended – candles left flickering madly
on the sill, leaving their sunken black holes.
We step away from the old window shaking
with gusts of grief, tearing walls out of this room
where we once undressed, pressed the world to our glassy
skin, where the thing we made or planned to make
was marvel enough to fill us.

We wait for the quiet swirl of light – tipped in
milk and waves – its slow stretch into wings.
The gold thimbles of sun and dead bugs lingering
in the day's worn pockets. Compassed by hunger,
the dog circles our feet, howling at the coming of rain.
He warns like a prophet, jumps up to the clouds
on our faces, breaking apart,
the windows shut tight, drapes drawn against
the bolt of sun, its truth-searing light
that crawls through
to rip us open.