Ekphrastic Reflection

by

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This piece of writing is one of eight ekphrastic reflections written by Notre Dame Creative Writing MFA students. Ekphrasis has been defined as a literary device in which a painting, sculpture, or other work of visual art is described in detail. Today, many contemporary writers use ekphrasis to translate existing visual artworks into new poems and stories. Does this ekphrastic reflection make you see the artwork in a new way?

OR CROSSING STREETS LIKE LETTERS

folds of flesh meter
pulled curtains of violets
dumping shadows a
caress then came down on

pages caressing the page
the glass blinked
out their bodies they march
like letters march and

word's dirt squeals into
vision a name winks behind
its glare draws itself in
tire skids draws memory of

a gasp a face folds
over its own blunt cipher
a hole in the phone rings
its circuit flow over

an ink blot carriage molds
doppelganger the letter
was missed on the street
corner it felt about

glass with stung lips says
shatter the street's word
rewind wretched girl
retching see thru

a contour of a law of a body
in violets holding the law
drowned in ink blots the body
drilling the city grid thrust

to hush the edges of diagram
voice sucked in vortex
the floral pistil a phantom
behind this letter drained

the arena of letters
and lips held a sign
tugged tongue flick pierced
a splitting butterfly today

preserved in cellophane
lost the letter the full
fax inflection lest
their eying glued out of

how the throat reads revolt
rolls the die on sidewalk
lands on their names in
pieces dissolved by

street gutter a relic of
past-tense prints the edge
of its portrait in wind
watch the crust of time wave

they disappeared behind
the light duct of names
crinkled plastic forced to a
grammar caressing the

silence or another
conjugation sculpts space
like a ditch the blue eye
socket the nose and that

moon stretched
over deleted pictures
deleted letters the gap mid
two front teeth slicks

along gum ridges against the
metric of dissolving features
ink blots render blush to
stammer out their names

Note: The poem can be read down its columns or through its rows. Each cube has also been written to function on its own.