

LINETTE REEMAN

“MONSTER BY MONSTER, EVOLUTION ADVANCES.”

- from *The Gene: An Intimate History*, by Siddhartha Mukherjee
[after Torrin A. Greathouse]

& no-one except for i knows how to classify this
specific medicine. my fingers each a new sound.

every word dragging research in reverse. i do not
imagine a fresh lover. or any body's cacophony.
instead i gut the animal pain that has been
nipping at me all day. it is not a pretty ending.

sometimes i cry when i cum because this is
proof that at least part of me works correctly.

& this is the most intimate evolution. how once
a monster howled & was placated by another's

hands. now, every night i grow a new mouth &
stuff it full with its own wail. i am not ashamed

to choose this heritage. instead i satiate in
private rather than see in a lover's eyes how ugly

i become when i am trying to win myself back.
every moment asking god forgiveness for, again,

wasting an orgasm on not producing another
creature. evolution only works because of

the existence of freaks. with mottled shells &
underwater eyes & fluorescent throats. these

are who survives the slaughter. & i splay
to quell the ocean my anxiety bellows from.

& i gulp my own name to fall asleep & stay
like that. & another monster squirms in me

& i expel all of the rude awful things science
is not able to name correctly. & at the end

when the best version of my body is produced
& there is no scientist to tell me this freak-

thing should not have survived, i infest each
complacent corner with all my new-born teeth.