

Jill Gamble

“Thank God for the bug on my window”

There’s a bug on my big glass window fronting Georgian Bay
The bug is small like one of the spots I see when I stand up too quickly
or push too hard on the toilet seat
little bubbles opening and closing before my eyes like mango moisture beads suspended in body wash

The bug on my window doesn’t move
maybe he’s dead
staying on the window because of some super powered slime that earlier spewed out of his abdomen
just before he perished
The wind can rattle the window and the bug doesn’t move
Minus twenty degree snow storms whip outside and the bug clings on
Hot sweltering sun roasts the back of my neck but the bug doesn’t fry
Heavy downpours with hail can try their best but the bug doesn’t slide away

Tomorrow if I look out the window and the bug is gone my heart may cease beating
my red blood may turn blue
and I’ll stiffen cold
I’ve come to know that the bug
that pest
that affront to an otherwise perfect water’s view is the reason my heart keeps beating
my mind keeps working
my hands keep giving with the full knowledge there will be nothing given in return

Angels claim to save us in the afterlife
but I know it’s the bug on the front window that sees me through
this otherwise bottomless life

“Eat me, or better yet, don’t”

Don’t watch me eat
Don’t even ask me what I’m having
Kindly shove that medium-rare steak in your mouth, chew, swallow and be done with it

I’ll go home and eat away from you
Nourishing my body with nuts and gluten drained grains

Keep your distance from me in the deli
I hate the way you watch the rotisserie chickens
skewed
turning on their silver stakes
little baby bodies with chopped off heads

Don’t tell me there’s pesticides
on my organic bananas
let me chew them vigorously
until their phallic wonder
is a pile of mush

Put your face in your custard
bloating with dairy goodness
let me drink my soya milk in peace
without noticing the vile pudding still left on the corners of your mouth
I hate the way her scent still clings to your beard

Don’t watch me eat
you can order out
or better yet
Leave
the waitress will smile with her boobs
while I stay home and read

My tea is getting cold
so hurry up and don’t forget to touch
the smeared chocolate
on my door

“I’ve got suicide in my back pocket”

I’ve got suicide in my back pocket
Just in case I need him
Kind of like a rainy day penny
only more potent

When I was born I came into a
can full of tomatoes stacked on top of one another
happily squished like family should be
Now the can’s almost empty and I’m almost alone
a mouldy yesteryear sun-fried tomato
perhaps longing for a final fast release out of some ketchup bottle

You and I are like diamonds
cutting each other
jockeying for position
to get our prism rays out into the world and into each other’s heads
You know best
or so you think
I sit at the table silently while our child pulls out fistfuls of my hair

ADD, ADHD, OCD, whatever acronyms Society wants to use
our son’s name to us is LOVE
But what is your name for me?
Once it was dumb and stupid
Has it changed?
After all these years do I finally reach the level of sunshine
like the sunlight I’m now looking at
sparkling off Georgian Bay
The beloved family cottage
Are we still a beloved family?

I’ve got suicide in my back pocket
Just in case I need her
But I won’t