

That Nothing

by Darryl Price

The thing feels your feelings for you. You let
it do this because it's easier than
being different. Do you remember
when you used to crave having wacky cartoon-like

adventures? This is a stolen
canvas or a door between crossed branches.
Even the scientists have to admit
they want to hide sometimes. This is a swimming

bird or an unusual looking
stink bug. Probably another dayglow
Japanese beetle that hitched a ride on
some strange orange cargo while no one was paying

particular attention. The thing
does your crying for you. You let it because
it's so much easier than showing
up barefoot outside the mirror's glassy-

eyed border without a punched ticket. The
bolted thing does your memory hitchhiking
for you. You let it because it's less
trouble than asking for a human touch.

This is a paper airplane wake-up call
or a screeching siren stirring to life
like a beehive under your pillow. The
electrified thing tells you when you are

sleeping, but it's always been capable
of lying straight to your face. You let it

because you are too tired to argue. Too
fed up to care. The thing tells you nothing's

wrong. The thing will play any song you choose.
Just name it. No surprises. Playing. The
always running thing could be choking you
in your sleep or attacking you on the

sidewalk in broad daylight. They say its heart
is missing a necessary water
valve. That's why it clanks so loudly. But the
sparkling wires will fetch you anything if

your question is thrown far and hard enough.
How could you not wish to see all those stars
for yourself? The thing's papers proves its eyesight
is better than yours. But your laughter

is like a snowflake in a meteor
shower. I should know. I've heard it, too. Things
only seem to want to serve an impossible
truth with a warped ultimate gusto

for an apocalyptic outcome.
But your joy, to me, is a bright enough
balloon to celebrate all that is without
taking a picture to send to a cloud.

