

Fascination

by Dianne McKnight-Warren

Lying all over itself like a rotten bungee cord, a small brown snake waits in a crevice in the stone wall. Not even shiny, ordinary as dirt, it has claimed its place before the sun climbs over the pine trees to warm up the rocks. I lie on the deck, head over the edge, looking down through binoculars like some big predator's eyes.

The snake moves ever so slightly all directions at once, thousands of perfect scales looping like cars on a gridlocked cloverleaf. It slips out of a crack, glides underneath a blade of grass that keeps perfectly still, and disappears around a rock until it comes out the other side, its body unwinding behind.

What astonishing grace, this crooked line along a dark crack, tongue like tiny lightning, head lifted eye to eye coming straight to face me as if to say, "See? I am a small brown snake, not even shiny, ordinary as dirt. But what the fuck are you?"

