

# The mannequins

by James Knight

I try to enjoy my book  
but the mannequins  
keep tapping  
at the window  
When I look up  
they vanish  
Outside  
fibreglass clouds  
are kept in place  
by invisible wires

—  
Sometimes the mannequins  
get behind my eyes  
I feel them tugging the strings  
of my nerves  
playing with my mechanisms  
They make themselves at home  
in the lumber room of my skull

—  
Asleep  
I'm most vulnerable  
Last night I dreamt that  
after a stock-take  
the mannequins murdered the staff  
dressed them in fashionably ugly clothes  
and displayed them  
in the window  
The night before  
cold hands placed plastic flowers  
on the graves  
of fashion designers

My persecution  
isn't all bad though  
It has its benefits  
When the mannequins  
possess my hands  
I tap out little poems on my phone  
The index finger  
of my tweeting hand  
pecks the touchscreen  
like a nimble bird  
Words chirp  
in the kingdom  
of their cage  
But the hand  
holding the phone  
is made of fibreglass

