

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

