

Muse

by Tahmina Maula

Lately, I'm learning to be my own muse. In the bedroom,
a stranger looks back from the wings of a gatefold mirror.
Self-image laid bare, stripped back to a type of triptych.
This vision, within infinite frames of light,
eerily recedes. At each angle
of transformation, the self is splitting atoms –
fragments, splinters, alter-egos – from Sylph
of air to Hydra of myth, Cubist creation
to Pop Art sensation. The multi-dimensional world-
within-worlds penetrates identity.
What you get is what you see – outsider,
outcast, alien. It's all that's left to show.
While inside the hidden self, the brightest jewel
quietly fades, swallowed into shadow.