

## 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.