



Baby/Face

Andrea Summers

The air in the foodcourt
is ordinary and embarrassing;
the baby with the chasm
in her face takes no notice,
lacking the vocabulary of contempt
and taken by neon and glass; enthralled
by straining bids at black-clad eccentricity,
the conveniences of modernity
laid for her like a table.

Despite the harelip she is charmed;
my heart leaps and
plunges to the floor (for her?)—
suspended in that cruel amber
ignorance: when the world—
kept up by appearances—is right,
and you appear all wrong and
don't yet know it.

Unassuming as she is to neglect revelry,
I dress her up in my grief as if
she were a doll, hollowbodied and senseless.
She is not my doll, nor
my beloved, nor bereaved, nor
my face to mourn in a mall.
She is saucer-beam eyes, fine-boned
trust, and wandersome tongue gumming
Cheerios produced by her mother
from a plastic sandwich bag.

