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Skin

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Skin

I was smooth, white, warm milk,
thick, heady cream decantation,
poured into this skin of mine,
unchipped, florid, howling pitcher.

I was a downy, baby bunny pelt,
but this pink hide never fit,
a husk wriggling and fidgeting
with every skulking breath;
no respite.

I was a young, hairy beau,
a skin stretched tautly over
itching muscle and bone,
steel epidermis, polished auto body,
a waxed metal rind wrapped
around revving, puerile motor gears,
peeling across an asphalt thigh.

I was a plastic scabbard sheath,
ribbed and lubricated bark
dissuading me from intimate
lapses and too eloquent caresses.

I was a Greek hero in
lustrous bronze patina, then
a tarnished, hollow warrior
collecting bleeding cuts,
pithy scars; hard, callused
dents and rust, dead crust;
and bruises, brilliant pupura,
in the gleaming, blue,
indigo, violet, aquamarine.

All became archaic myths
worn, old yarns scratched
in calfskin parchment codex,
ponderously heavy in museum dust.

And now this skin hangs
about me, a battered remnant,
lanky, passé shirt,
threadbare, baggy trousers,
frayed at the cuffs.

-David Sapp
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