

The crimson skin and cleft the boy skin wonder

Like some fallacy of totality
I step into the light.
And I'm blinded by it.
Going to close my eyes I notice
There are no eyelids.
Already burnt off.
Perpetually staring
I notice, upon raising my hand
To block the torch,
That the skin on my hand is already peeling.
Layers at a time fall off
And I feel immediately more real.
My raw and skinless skin
Catches against the walls of the corridor
Tearing off another layer each time.
My revealed layer is sticky and hot and cat hairs are caught in it.
Boiled jelly left out on the side too long.
Cat food in gravy.
I wobble. Walking unsteadily, feet too attached
to the ground. Ripping paper sheets from my underside.
I get shorter with every step.
It smells.
Off like a yoghurt in the sun but without the speed of movement.
Sticky and I'm stuck
in a corridor of scolding heat and light.
Shedding and leaking
a snail trail behind me.
It itches.
But when I put my fingers against it they
Stick too.
I try to drag my nails along it
making tracks in the soil and it sticks under my nails.
No choice but to go deeper
I tear the flesh and touch the bone.
Kept together no longer
I'm so pleased to discover there's nothing inside me
except last night's tea.



Martha Wilson

art by Chloe Dootson-Graube