

TWO POEMS



Gabriel Levin

INLAY

In soft ivory Ashtoreth-at-the-Window stares
at me with her one good eye.
For three days now she's fixed
her blunt gaze,
made more penetrating by the tiny hole
drilled in the pupil,
on my own figure washed in shadows
and indeterminate.

No matter how I fidget in my chair
or wander, boy-errant, in my mind
she's there, nooked above
my left shoulder, leaning on the balustrade
and giving me that absorbed
look, dissembling
interest, as if I were the lure
in the stolid air.

TERAPHIM

These standing female
figurines of unknown provenance,
with pinched nose
and hands crudely
cupping stuck-on

pellets for breasts,
broad-hipped, stick
in the throat, and gimlet-eyed—
shaped to preside

over the vanquished,
over the mudbrick
household, snug
as a rib cage.

In all strangeness
they watch over our solitude,
these frangible
low-fired images, unhoused
and rudely mute.