Graham Foust
Embarrassments
Flood Editions
Dongle

What guaranty for the proto-form
we fumble our souvenir ethics to and for.
The rich keep what they have by having more
and more and more. A is for apple.
B’s for brought a gunfight to an Apple Store.

The kind of dongle you want’s the kind of dongle
you need, and every second of every minute
of every—you get it—of a life or of life’s
an accident. That’s psychologically
and phenomenologically true (and therefore
largely uninteresting) but you have other thoughts
like bones have names, like the petals
at the front edge of the end of a bouquet,
like warmth into nothing, like the difference
(other than one) between the number two
and the number three. Kinda dongle you need?

Mina Loy first put this poem’s first eleven words
in their good order in a poem called “Songs to Joannes.”
My title is in English in the original, looking busy
and maybe just in from outdoors. The rest
has gone ballistic, keeps what it has to—
a close watch, for now, on what’s all yours.
Neener

neener neener—
nature ignores a mirror.

*

There are more versions of this world
than there are other worlds.

*

Crucifixion, but looser;
resurrection, no pressure.

Even being mortified at work gets boring.

*

Forgive the mouth
the sweet mess
of liberty; forgive
each touching fake.

*

A cloud such as could make
a crescent moon a neon fang.

*
Thought’s slight gag’s
the most special effect,
that face only funny
for my never having made it.

* 

I keep a list of things that don’t have names.

* 

Whatever moves in the dark
might as well be the dark,
but letting not knowing show
won’t make up for not knowing.

* 

Oh great—now it’s all holy:
*crutch tips or crutch tips?

* 

Contempt for art was already art’s potential.

* 

I brake for glimpsed limps.
Hey all you writers and artists out there,
I know you think you’re tortured and lonely,
but please, hear me out: on your most tortured
and most lonely days, think of our dear friends
the climatologists, who, when we play
the bad-at-science game, during which we
with inside fake accents beseech them—“Pray
tell us: our children, are they the last people?”—
gently press their crumpled foreheads to ours,
like kissing almost, and say, “You don’t have to
stay here, but you can’t go home, and of course
we adore you and your plaintive suspense,
but also we know that a yes or a no
is what you want so that you can give up.”
Spring’s here, but it feels more like midsummer, 
and while this feeling’s been discussed among 
most everyone I know for several years now, 
I mention it anyway, not so much 
to my chagrin as to our distraction, 
as that masterpiece, the one with a little 
brown coming out of it, has its ass to us, 
and life near the air-raid whistle and its tests 
continues apace, a last place for last things, 
last actions, like moving our arms and legs 
as though we’d like to soon be rid of them, 
and the usual imprecise promise 
to be so good if we can just get through this, 
our language—a product, oddly enough, 
of bodily thrust and an inkwell upset— 
having discouraged the better part of us 
from ever writing another letter, 
and in the air today’ll make for itself, 
we’ll get used to blistering easily, 
a good time—won’t it be?—for mastery, 
dirty water over almost every bridge?