

Venus de Milo with Drawers Moves Out of the Malibu Dreamhouse

Ken says he's had enough.

Pink fur toilet seat cover, hairbrushes,
dining room chandelier, Rollerblades,
stethoscope, clothes hangers, the convertible
outside, even the dog—they'll all have to go.

I box all the mesh and the evening gowns.
Stuff as many scarves as I can
into my forehead until it aches.
Open my chest—I dare you
to count all the shoes. I've taken
as many pairs as I can fit inside.
All worth a jab in the ribs, this shortness of breath.

Ken says it's all too much—this excess:
the length of my hair, the number of drawers
making my body. Believes I am nothing
more than the sum of my collectible parts.

He stands in the doorway
as I fill myself to the brim
with rhinestone, leather, neon.
Wanting to spit at him—
I have been president. I have gone to space.

Instead, I look around a room that is no longer
my own. Fuchsia paint peeling, salty streaks
on the window, the sagging banister
a dirty shade of white.

There had been bright mornings, strawberries
on pink crystal plates. Ken on the shore
leaning on a surfboard stuck in the sand.

Me, in a paisley robe, waving
from the balcony. Skin glinting in the sun.

Ken says he's had enough.

But he doesn't understand—

I have always been surrounded

by beautiful things, eaten them whole.

Open me and find something that can live forever.