

Yellow Fever

“Dirty is yellow...”

Gertrude Stein

You are the kind of person who would frame a print of Hokusai's
Dream of a Fisherman's Wife and stroke the airplane
at night, imagining yourself as monster, tentacular
ladykiller. I am the eavesdropper sitting in your ear listening

to everything you whisper—I am smaller than milkweed bug,
and you can't kill me. With the smugness of a man who has
just caught a trout, you say *I do like those Asian women*.
I will fuck you up with the spastic ember of a Puccini opera.

I know what you crave. It is larger than me. It is the pretty
face on the library book—the fallow field, the woman
with a comb in her hair, a grin about her like so many
hives. It is squalid peonies, murderous silk. It is febrile butterflies

and it is slave. It is shedding its clothes and it's shredding your pants
and you are the thing in the plastic bidet. Don't try to musk the malodor—
Anyone can smell. You love the feel of socket on tongue? Strip
the pork rind. Shoot the waif. See that smile? Simulacrum.

Tiny waist in jade—you sweat, you slaver. What is this body
to you? Body you subsume—body you misconsume? To have
and to hurt—utter the word *Orient*, I dare you. She may spit
or she may nod. Who's to say the hornbeam awakens to blight.