

# All This and More

By Mary Karr

The Devil's tour of hell did not include  
a factory line where molten lead  
spilled into mouths held wide,

no electric drill spiraling screws  
into hands and feet, nor giant pliers  
to lower you into simmering vats.

Instead, a circle of light  
opened on your stuffed armchair,  
whose chintz orchids did not boil and change,

and the Devil adjusted  
your new spiked antennae  
almost delicately, with claws curled

and lacquered black, before he spread  
his leather wings to leap  
into the acid-green sky.

So your head became a tv hull,  
a gargoyle mirror. Your doppelganger  
sloppy at the mouth

and swollen at the joints  
enacted your days in sinuous  
slow motion, your lines delivered

with a mocking sneer. Sometimes  
the frame froze, reversed, began  
again: the red eyes of a friend

you cursed, your girl child cowered  
behind the drapes, parents alive again  
and puzzled by this new form. That's why

you clawed your way back to this life.

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