

Solipsism as Maternal Instinct

by Sandra Simonds

For a while, everyone loved me.
I got so confident that I put magenta high-
lights in my mane. There was even a little
sway to my gait. My hips
grew fuller and I considered
myself beautiful. I beautified
the displaced space around my
form like a mare bends
the landscape. I wore fewer
clothes, allowed my breasts
a bit of sunlight and then I nursed
my child in public. It was like my body
was one big eye, opening and shutting.

For a while, everyone asked me how
my baby was doing, about my plans
for the future. I had

friends. Once in a while one of them
would say “Oh let me get that” and
take some cash out of her wallet
and buy me my
coffee. I had no idea that I was
a Cyclops, that the opening and shutting
was because there was powdered milk
caught behind my contact lenses,
that people were still talking about
men I had sex with.

Then my milk dried up. My husband
failed his paternity
test and left. (We have not seen him since
July 18th, 2009 so if anyone
knows where he is, please
email me.) Then all my friends
followed suit, like Annie who
who left a note on my doorstep
that said “Can you
please return my DVD of *Beaches*
and those onesies I gave
you. I’m pregnant again.”

My son jumps up and down in the second-
hand exersaucer I've set up in the
living room. The air is composed of
beaks and hooves, squawks,
neighs, unraveling DNA.
You're brilliant, these plastic
farm animals say, their primary colors
made in God's image.