



In defence of Mechanical Reproduction.

*After Girl with a Pearl Earring*

- I. Suppose she lays lightly against the wall, subtly lit and precisely framed. She looks across the quiet buzz. Large ajar doors and stretching green walls both static in the coming and goings.
- II. Suppose as you stand apart from her, like a familiar friend. Her parted lips and turned head brings on a quiet and ticking thought.
- III. Suppose you felt, she was pinned in your mother's kitchen calendar. Balanced on blue walls, soon to folded in when May comes. She'll kiss your doctor's appointments, and planned holidays until winter.
- IV. Or maybe, she's sat silently on your sister's bookshelf, peeking from the other pages.
- V. She's much *smaller you know* you'll hear people say. And you think to a poster fair, where you could flick through and past Vermeer's life's work – with interludes of Netflix's originals and a map of Middle Earth.
- VI. But here again, you stand with her, and behind her, you see, isn't black. It's muffled browns and greens swollen together into seen shadow.
- VII. Suppose she's cinema when Scarlet Johansson appears. Her pale face and pushed back hair.
- VIII. Now you can see, the shadows are woven by hand. Shaken and shivered into shape.
- IX. Is it really such a terrible thing? To know the pose, the way the head turns, the underneath of the pearl - how circles in on itself? How It's domed and caught still? You can imagine it's sways between brush strokes.
- X. Perhaps later she'll come as your sifting through your bloated wallet. A poking head among train tickets and receipts. A ticket for the Hague – surrounded in language you can't understand.
- XI. In the static, you stand with her a moment more. And with final inspection, you turn ready for the other frames.