

## A Spotted Flicker

After my brother Ian  
ate six bananas, drank  
a gallon of water, threw

every remote control  
in the house through  
a different window

while singing the chorus  
of R. Kelly's "I Believe  
I Can Fly," I figured

I'd be next to lose  
my mind. I went on  
lookout for any glitch

in my psychic operation:  
if I spotted a flicker  
of insanity, I wanted

to trap it, throw it in  
a padded room in a corner  
of my head until it fizzled

out. But when I did  
spot one, and then another,  
I panicked. They began

to spread. In the space  
between waking and sleep,  
when dreams take

hold but not yet narrative,  
I caught myself every time.  
My mind was devolving,

I believed, into virulent  
 shapes that would feed  
 on organ, tissue, cell,



soul. This is how  
I became afraid of dreaming.  
I don't know why

this comes back to me as I see  
you, spider, zigzag up my chair.  
We are in perfect health,

choking on dry air  
and salt dust rising  
from the white road.

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