cat-sized Swift Fox into habitats from which it was brought to the brink of extinction earlier in the century. The recent interest in preserving biodiversity, and the protection of endangered animal species, as well as a renewed sense of human need to connect with the natural world, will perhaps result in a change of attitude towards carnivorous animal species. The medieval mind saw humans as masters of the natural world, while animals were created solely for the use of humans. The fox, which seemed to serve no "useful" purpose, was treated as vermin, but also admired for his cleverness. Western society now stands on the brink of a change of attitude towards nature. The fox has survived centuries of abuse. Perhaps a chance still remains for recognition to be given to his unique attributes and the part he plays in the interconnectedness of life.

four

a pocket of air
lodge in my cheeks
 sends my jaw clamping down
to suppress it.

how four
paws color in me

I sneeze
or squint
or shutter my eyes,
or other excuses
why bother

they are welling up.

soon everyone will see—maybe it’s
something
about my jaw clamping down
they don’t ask about.
they see themselves in those eyes
their body,
their substance,
their reflection,
their answers,
their voice
from their mouth in those eyes.

how four
paws color in me

they are welling up.

I want to make them chew things
they do not want to chew
they see themselves in those eyes
I wash them away

David Del Principe