

"LIKE A PANTHER IN THE GLOVE"... Emily Dickinson

"Always gentle, mindful of others,"
 said now of my neighbor in psalter tones amid
 furred sibillance of whispers and carnation overkill
 thick enough to make her bier.
 Covetous of her earned esteem,
 my dual anger blurts: Is this worth living and dying for?
 This maudlin mumbling mass?
 Their sentiment a sentence!
 At that, what charity can ever honey their tongues
 with me? Pious pap pasted
 on mobile lips once mine are cosmetically closed—
 what right have they to my name in their warm mouths!

Maybe she wasn't always wonderful. Or maybe
 she ran on low amperage—never knowing how it is
 to operate on your own hot crossed circuitry,
 splicing with scorched fingers your own frayed
 smoking wires. Or maybe she
 did it all and knew it well
 under insulation of infinite grace.

I will make myself her monument.