

Amorak Huey

The Letter X Puts on a Clown Suit, Sits on a Park Bench Across From a Playground, and Contemplates Fatherhood

Who knew there'd be all these questions? It's not the screaming
but the facial expressions that get you,
seven hundred ways to indicate disgust.

It's not the shit in the diapers but the changing that's difficult.

It's the smell of 3-in-1 oil that dials up childhood –
a black rotary phone on the wall of a garage,
that ring a surprise every time
and hanging up doesn't always disconnect your call.
It's the violently smooth handle of a hammer
and so many different saw blades:
teeth for every need.

You cannot make a thing without putting yourself at risk.
It's not the sweat or tears or even the blood,
it's how authentically you break out *motherfucker*
when your thumbnail rips off.

Build a treehouse to prove what?
That you know how to cut out a trapdoor
or where the rope belongs?
There's no such thing as a gift



but at least slides are no longer made of jag and rust.

Some things can be taught, or at least learned:
why a triangle's the strongest shape,
when to cut against the grain,
how to pluck chalked string against new wood
without leaving a double red line,

misleading and expensive. That's the thing.
Even wearing a rainbow wig, you pay for every mistake.

