

The Imprint: Ekphrastic Psychoanalysis

E. Powell

In this poster-print, he saw every patient he ever had
talking about love.

But everyone perceives different things,
the first session begins:

Tell me what do you see in this?

Some go into a trance to decipher
exactly what it is

abstract—silk-screened—barrage of Rorschach.

Each angel who appears in his Miami office
has read Wallace Stevens, has seen

fireflies in mating season

doppelgangers in the bedroom wallpaper,
trying to get out

a Grecian urn or a jar
upon a hill in Tennessee.

There is the husband who sees his wife spending all their money,

and the wife who sees the stars overhead, through the skylight, in bed all alone:

they both agree on one thing—both see their marriage vows in it,
but written upside down, in a red accountant's pen.

At night when Mrs. Rodriguez comes in to dust, she sees a red apple
in a butcher's kitchen, and knows this can't mean anything
too good.

The shrink had brought it back from his International Shrink Convention,
Barcelona, 1968.

He himself had once fallen in Spain one terribly hot summer,
it was then the smell of Sunday morning citrus imprinted in his mind,

and whenever he thought of the words "dusk" or "touch" or "desire"
he could smell Clementine rinds, blood oranges—

