

REPTILIAN RHAPSODY

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Tree Lizard
(Urosaurus ornatus)

Fierce the lizard heart
that beats within the reptilian breast,
Ivory cold belly
ribs dance like spider's legs.
Delicate Dragon
with perfect toes
each hold a tiny scimitar
of fairy mail;
I dare not detain your restless patrol
with a monster's hands.

Of God's perfection
I love the lizard best;
with passion and wonder
they move me,
I shiver to the touch of lizard feet,
I hold them to my cheek with closed eyes.
So impassively clean, the eyes

wet exploding blackness/ebony-bright
miss nothing.
The skull is so fragile
bearing its weight of scrimshaw detail.

In spring the males dance;
Hormonal rainbows flare the bellies,
the throats, the sides.
Species syncopation
beats out the siren tattoo
for the female on patrol,
A male dance of hearty push-ups,
a fox-trot for progeny.

Somewhere mortals cannot find
they lay their eggs;
Fragment dinosaurs
curling in un-birdlike shells
in sand, shadow, magic.
In coolness lizards emerge,
scales intact, to haunt
the corners of the eye.