

## American Family: A Syndrome Singing Skin Disorder

It's the humming—not notes.  
Not a melody. It's a signal. A rattle

nesting in my joints.

Like the snarl of yard mutts,  
the clipped chirp

of an unhinged ceiling fan.

When they sit near me  
some brown, soupy ditty

scurries down my spine.

Like they've trapped a rusty  
robin in their elbows.

Modulated and molded.

Pored. Pock-marked. Smooth  
as an infant's innocence.

Skin.

There's this thing I see every morning  
on the AM bus.

Who sees twelve-year old legs?

A book bag? A girl?  
It says "Come."

It sings, "I am your now."

**Inconclusive Disorder—**  
Patients under observation have displayed symptoms of Singing Skin Disorder (SSD) where patients' pores emit a melody-like auditory sound, much like that of a bird or whale call. Patients with darker pigmentation appear to have larger pores, and often times their skin emits an offensive, less melodic tonal pitch than those with less melanin.

Under microscopic evaluation of skin samples, there seems to be no distinguishable markers in any of the documented SSD patients that differentiate them from non-SSD patients. All of the doctors in our observation facilities have heard the songs. Patients under observation report hearing skin songs of other patients, however all evidence point to a lack of auditory recognition of their own, leaving us to believe this is a type of auditory pheromone or territorial marking made by the body wherein the host is unaware.

This high pitched lilt  
chucks its volume down the street.

Its trickster, blow-pop smile is a mistake,

is anger, a wily, guttural ruse. Deep  
under her skin, her hollow jingle jabs my ribs

makes me want to slam a face to the ground.

Such danger in those open hands.  
Can't you hear the quiet composition?

The falsetto pitch and thrust?

Oh, to have that song  
running running running through me.

On occasion we have tried  
to record the music of SSD  
patients, but upon  
playback, the recordings  
contain no sound. Along  
with no evidence of patients  
hearing their own skin, the  
lack of documentation  
leaves doubt as to if the  
songs actually exist.

Whether SSD is temporary,  
permanent or actual is  
inconclusive.