

TW: minor tryphobia and body horror involving animals.

Fauna: A Moldering Turtle

Larger than any related specimen since the Triassic period,
this reptile has become sightless,
as its front-facing eyes are pale and unmoving,
instead relying on the sounds its prey makes,
as it moves around its discarded habitat.

Smell is another sense that proves unreliable,
as its nostrils have clogged with detritus and plastic,
two honeycombs of rainbow-colored tubes jammed together,
stuffed with plastic rings and soda-can tabs.

Its cracked carapace is long-dyed black with oil.

Scaly flippers bloodied and rubbed raw,
sometimes down to the bone,
from sun-bleached orange and pink netting
winding around its torso and limbs.

Its beak has become serrated and bone-white,
gray tongue lolling out
as it tears desperately at half of a tire.

The back flippers have been rendered near-immobile,
as any creature's would be when dragged through a sea of damp cement.

It buries its eggs beneath a carpet of corpse hair, turf and wiring.
They are rusty, covered in slime,
and the young hatch with straws lodged in their noses.