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[In the Cross-Countertop Silence]

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[In the Cross- Countertop Silence]

when 50-year-old men
grin like sharks, I want to crawl out

of my skin & into a suit
of armor. I am
nametag bold: Not Fucking
Around. I will graft
scales to skin: if I harden, maybe
sweethearts & honeys will

ricochet. If blood could boil
I would fuel my steps
with red haze, diffuse it
through my pores & pigment myself—
let the predators know I am
poisonous to the touch.

Please, stand in my
how-can-you-be-a-size-six shoes
for eight hours. Listen to men
speak. Watch their hands
come across the counter & weigh
a paycheck against
my pride: a glass bottle: a hurricane
against their heads—the barrier to lives I wish
I could make men live.