

Your eyes are everywhere

Your eyes are everywhere,
dotted all over the place.
I watch them watching me.

Are you there,
behind the smear
of the lens?

Nothing is clear anymore,
there are only shades of grey.

I'm on file.

You've seen me before,
but have I seen you?
Down at the dole office, at customs,
at the ATO? At the
video store, at the bank
standing in line for the ATM?
Have you seen my HECS debt?
Have you seen my marks
in the school records, the university files?
The department of education has
compartmentalised my life.

I'm not a wife, so there's no
marriage certificate, but my birth
is recorded on a thin sheet of green paper.
You can find my CV and check the dates.
Death will come later,
with its litany of reports.

If I build a house I'll need
to see the council. Is this domicile habitable,
within the bounds of local code?
I'd need a loan...
there's a shitload of forms to fill out.

My name is listed
on the water rates,
the electricity,
the Telstra bill,
the mobile
and the electoral roll.

The rental office knows me well.
The department of housing
holds half my bond.

The RTA is fond of me. They have more
photos of me than my grandmother
has lined up on her mantelpiece.

The police don't have me
on file yet. Time will tell.

I'm rarely sick...there's not too many medical
records, although the women's health clinic
knows me inside out.

The paper trail is thick.
I have killed a forest.

I spool across miles of film,
an ocean of slippery acetate.
I smile foolishly,
caught on CCTV.

I must be a threat
to the national security.
I am one small girl,
but god you watch me well.

Dove Rengger-Thorpe