

STEVEN CRAMER

FOR OUR OWN GOOD

I'm seeing through a cilium
of retinal membrane, fibrous
as tweed, pulled loose and left
dangling into the left eye's take
on my life's *mise-en-scène*.

Always into Hitchcock, I watch
the mesh I look through spiral
like the title graphics to *Vertigo*—
I even know which swirl: blue-
green, with a hint of the gecko

in the squint it gives me back.
T-shirts, jeans, and boxer briefs
heaped on a bureau can evolve,
in the conning dark, to a cave
bear from the Pleistocene. No

bear devolves into underwear,
however. Walking an orchard
I lived in, I sometimes mistook
a twig in my path for a snake.
Boy, did I jump, being a man

of my species, which can see
a thread of retina as a twist
of homespun, or call a twill
weave *herring bone*, yet can't
always spot the smile in simile.

Beguiling wise, blind Homer,
*what we have hunted and killed
we leave behind*, teased the boys
riddled with lice. *What escapes
we bring with us*, said the same

lice-ridden boys. Appearance
gulls us, for our own good
or ill, which deceived Ophelia
saw all too well: *woe to have seen
what I have seen! See what I see!*