M.I.L.F.

The M's self-explanatory.
The I
is a boy-man's first-person perspective—
a set of eyes evaluating
her body's sensual potential
relative to his anticipated pleasure:
a furtive cost-benefit analysis
taking into account hidden value against
asset depreciation.

L stands for like, but it's the K in like
that I like for its indecorous clack
of tongue against soft palate
followed by a tiny capitulating exhale—
breath that subordinates itself
to the future's pulsing throb,

a throb I can feel from here
as I stand at the gas pump
near a boy-man topping off
his already-full tank
with aggressive lever-pumps.
He's like a nearly satiated baby
nodding off to sleep
but awakening with a start
once the nipple pops free of his lips.
He's got a clamping latch
and loud, complaining colic.

That cry's going to shatter your nerves,
the nurse said to me postpartum,
and my firstborn—my daughter—did,

but I got my nerves back.
Or, we grew them anew
together.

My favorite nerve's still the one
connecting my nipple to
my contracting womb.
I'd never have known
how animal and wild I am
but for that burning flare,
casting light enough
by which to survey the ground
of my body's farthest biomes.
Boy-man at the gas station
doesn't know nipples, or nerves, or
wombs from Adam, but
judging from his handling of this moment,
he knows what the F signifies.
His thoughts' transit
from M to F
seems quick,
prematurely coming
without verification
of my M status
or the length, depth, or
breadth of his own L.
What I think
he knows best is
I.
He's an I expert,
giving tours of local,
erect monuments to: being.

And his being wants me to know
he sees me: being.
I to I.
And for that, I thank him.
His is an affirmation
of a kind, here at Pump #3.
Even as his gaze travels
across my body, he's tearing the receipt
hard and fast away from the pump,
crumpling it in a clenched fist as
his eyes move like the jet stream that
rakes then dips
across America's
breadbasket, dropping heat
and moisture down and down,
before rising up and
peeling out
to sea.
In a Ford F-150.