Letter from an Outworlder
Juno Artley

Losing count of the eyecles days
Since I broke containment, escaped that place
(What did they call it? Area 51?)
I know little of this world, and yet too much
My end is coming, I know, but
That is probably for the best

Around me:
Mountains, parched land, clear skies
Plants (sagebrush?), an endless road
So dry, so dry everywhere.
They said it’s not all like this.
They said Earth is a diverse planet.
Sometimes lakes and rivers
Sometimes vast groves of photosynthetic beings
Trees, they were called,
Sometimes hot, sometimes cold
But all I have ever seen
Is mile after mile of endless dryness.

The inhabitants:
Curious creatures I can never hope to understand
Individuals. Each following their own directives
Even when they conflict.
There is no hive, only the self.
They said they’re not all like this.
They said Earth is a diverse planet.
Sometimes the humans are kind to their own
Sometimes the humans are vain, building
Monuments to their own wealth.
Sometimes the humans exploit, or be exploited
But not once have I met a human
Who would accommodate a xeno.

I don’t know why I write. I can only hope
My final moments may help someone.
To all my sisters, like me
Separated from the hive, alone in a strange world,
Spectacles, trying to survive, glorified objects
to be used in various research projects,
I miss you. Be careful who you trust.