

TOTI O'BRIEN

House of Jaguars

Two in the backyard. Black, shiny, they turn in a circle.
They stare down, mysterious as wild animals are.
I was told their jaws could sever a limb. They're killer machines.
Take a moment to ponder those teeth and those fangs.

I'm enthralled by the enigma of their gaze. The insolvable puzzle.
How can I detect what they think? Can I trust them?
Do not, my heart says. Don't trust jaguars.
Not even those embossed on cars.

These are tame, though. Giant toys.
They like everyone, lick your hand, come play with the baby.
I should take the job. It pays well.
Only respect proper feedings.

All is orderly explained.
Bowls are numbered and here is delicate food.
For sure not what I expected.
Clever diets perform miracles.

We can stay, baby and I. House sit, water plants.
Yes, the gig is well paid. We can stay.
My heart gives me a squeeze. Don't trust jaguars, it sighs.
Especially if they come in pairs.