for Mom and Dad and for Trent
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Treatise on Drowning
perspective from pitch and tent

no low tones fill the
hollow temple bell of earth
resting you inside

high green covers this
prehistoric black in the
flood year, thrush and fish

rust canyon echoes
nail patches: do they use glue
or coffin staples?
pulley wheel and medicated mimesis

I’m losing you in
synapse, rebuilding us in
strange memorial

here the sea is calm,
laying flat against the earth
stretched parachute silk
molecular stabilization of liquid surface area, rapture

is this enough for
us, to sit on two floating
rafts, untied, on fire
carpeted hallway without windows

under water we
only hear the hushed voices
of secretive fish

gills moved around you
in the silent thick for days.
we looked there, there and

cavernous hideout
you rogue! what are they saying?
hold my feet down too.
and after that, the flying sequence

anxiety: the
jaws of life crack and splay me.
innards full of you.

(this is banal, this
is banality. this is
all just filler sand.)

a live autopsy:
are you watching? We are spleen,
cadaverous waste.
arms upon arms to an earth

you called your Eden
desert, immutable wayplace
of God, pulsing, still.

I called, newly
staked, and dusted your ear, pressed
together the hum.

the tree’s square hands
punctured our shine’s reddening cracks,
its loud birth swallowed

the overfolded
map whole in temporary
green, first bush, dune, hill.
superimposed, your father, who art on top of the dam

the spillway screams that
it will crush us, that it will
eat our lovers and

children; he screams
we won’t see water like this
for ten years, I scream

I could be thrown in
cycle happily, it will
eat our lovers, our
sweaty excavation on waters’ edge

at the end of this
(pilgrimage) I hope to find
you waiting for me

on this gray island
only I am away from
you. I will return.

I sit with one seat
empty so the air can hold
my hand. sad trade wind
bliss

there was a song you
found in a used car, cardboard
box in the back seat

lucky tape deck, it
sang trashy demo copies
to my balcony

you had to hold down
the plastic rewind button
to listen to me

(flicker)
sleepwrinkled linguistics as installation art

you said you’d live in
a tent and travel the skin
of me, lay in the stakes
black on black frost skyline

cut
the sky was open,
we watched the stars die, launch their
tiny, old bodies

you commandeered my
shirtsleeve, slid your hand from mine
up to hold my arm

look. do you see the
destroying angel standing
here, yes, on my right hand.
quotidian

you held my hand in
both of yours because I said
I eat cheap ramen
the gift you made of a coconut shell ring

but the drawer-buried
watch you probably wore on
water, long way down,
I hold the throat to my ear, disembodied
re-embodied, a darling miniature
of my capacity. This is how large I am.
I breach the pacific in seconds. My voice here
and here and here and here.
Knock, and it will answer. Leave
a message and a hollow tone becomes the return
a dove, a boomerang, and the holy spirit.
Dear god please let him pick
up. pick up. Instead she picks up
picks the tone she chooses, a tiny record
mimics, mimicry, see also narrative voice over:
cries
the unthinkable: we’ve sailed past the point of no return.
Please call back, call back I’ll tell you then
in code, voice check, one-two
one
Her voice severs an apple core, burns the seeds,
this is how large I am. Sliced along longitudes
in seconds. The voice here
and here and here (no pictograms: no one says boat
because there was never a boat just water.) Un pacified
in seconds. This is my stem, the tide of
who you’ve reached, she is
relieved, secretly, that I answered in hologram,
allowed myself to unveil horror
as it happened, I grip the knife here,
and here and here,
the serrated boomerang, the obliterated dove,
the pigeon’s throat soldered with the message.
Precautions:

S— has taken the phone,
We stop by the store for frozen yogurt
and whole foods. He doesn’t have the phone
yet, but he will because she can’t answer it.
Just in case, he says, comments on the entry
from ‘really cute girl’ and some irreconcilable
nonsense. S— shows me around
the store without looking me in the eyes.
He’s not taking the day off. No one speaks
out loud.
Waterproof

The things that become waterproof,
a legacy of stuff evolving:
the watch I took from the drawer
the mascara my mother asked for in the middle of the night
    (and black nylons, please)
seaworthy platters, containers with airtight lids
the lids we close carefully varnished

the tin phone begins to rust
under pressure: the single numbers leak,
seep message into mechanism, flood
cogs, overrun pumps.
    (the bilge in the back spills)
with whom am I speaking? A missed call
exhumes the happiest voice, the tie to our former lives
the last time
the last time, the last time
it surfaced
Responsibilities:

I am the second, a secondary life
located somewhere north, somewhere
people go for graduations, but not
because he’d admit that he liked it
after all. 1. unsaid.
no one will know but you unless;
and you have all the numbers, so;
but no one will ask, because, well;
I begin with a.

minutes waterlogged. bilge in the back.

I call north, sound the hollow
siren, the second:
they’ll drive all night to be there
by Friday.

(2. the obituary. A lexicon
of 200 words or less)

3. peel pictures from albums full
of everything before me, primary
school, et al. Careful with his
mother’s log of dates, places, people

There are at least seven
Books. a watery eclipse

I bridge. I begin with 1.
abyssal complex: memorial sky
cheiloscopic exhumation

you kissed the window,  
facing glass with chapstick whorles  
for a forensic

rebirth. I could grow  
your lips on a petri dish  
twelve months later; or

could I kiss you one  
more time darkly from the glass  
and feel you push back

hold me until I  
get there, are you waiting, please,  
I was something once.
Grassflat aphasia

single seedy head,
its dandelion cotton
compacted with grass.

face up: blank over
surfacing fire ants trembling
into shirt, jeans, bra

still. as though opened
forcibly and suspended
over your dark shell.

my bitten hand pulls
the flexing stem, a trade for
the groomed, pink jar

without lexicon
for this, what else can I do
but bring you flowers
when the decision is finally made

bleeding frozen
under cold magnolias;
the sky pales to match.
abandonment for two

you gave me a bike,
a cruiser with a light that
shines when you peddle

it’s black, the better
of two; you named the red one
like a proud father

and swear they were left
for rust at the rack, locked and
abandoned to us

I finger the dents,
wonder who misses my gift,
whether you meant it.
on the third day, prescience

we wait in your room
wonder if the pieces here
knew before we did
A weighted scale, a hypotenuse

I peel you from ten albums, check vacations and suburbs for you, check your mother’s blue script check you are who I think you are. check the proof.

it will bear what they balance for or against me in the coming days.
a flooded grave

wind moves in strata
breathes a high transparency,
you pass this in waves

we stand in the green
of death, a tent under the
sunburned canyon wall

I am unnamed in
grief, not your widow, nor blood
my ribs are all mine

introductions are
long. fallen faces forget
the look of water.
wet feathers, flying fish, quiet thrashing

mythical thrasher
do you have wings that arch
from your shoulder blades?
Within the reproachable range of red dirt Alone

red ground a silent
slouch, sticky and dry under
the nail (the digging)

the bare, dirty stretch
holding borders against crab
grass, manufactured

and rolled inside the
gravel parking strip, a piece
waits grassless, reddened

low air picks a dirge,
erosion before this berth,
dry ground, lost-named.

rock in hand, I dig,
sweep dust into shifting wind,
one shallow hole now,

(maybe more later)
dirt affirming spaced bodies,
parallel: I am

belly down, clawing
myself into this earth hand
over clod-filled hand

mounds, stubbed rocks exhale
your dust, a root, dry cuts and
I swear I will get

to you, I will until
I bleed your impacted dirt
and the red nothing

but the heaving of
the earth against the sky.
arrhythmia, the late show

for two months like an
erratic pump pump, my eye
spasms, sees nothing

insomnia: verb;
accelerated skin or
gauze, anesthetic

your pajamas smell
like terror, legs moving like
suspended paper

dehydrate, tic, watch
this eye socket wrench, tic, hold
you with tiny hands
november in to

hold strands against
my chest, your down dishwater
blond, scoop handfuls

find my clothes dusty
and clung to it under red
wood slats, cobwebs, through

slugslime and aphids,
shimmy through the crawlspace, I
would roll in it, lean

for the breeze-rolled grass-bound hair left, the good student
sitting tall, still for

scissoring, clumps falling
feathery from the last haircut,
your hair is still under the porch.
From the desk of linguistic fishmongery

your house grows foreign
(I wait) the basement closes
our dusty blankets.

stale sinks your room. most
clothes gone, a drawer becomes a
chair and brown curtains.

your desk’s overflow
of pictures in triplicate,
grossly piled cards

and my letters, leafed
through like an open rib cage,
house the grayish film.

it would be nothing
if this stretch housed us wholly
in private stasis
birthland without jungle scene

it wouldn’t have been possible for me to fold enough paper cranes
treatises

a hollow, over
folded map of the island,
the left-side ocean

forces itself on
the sky like a foreigner,
eviscerating

I hear your birth come
late and washed, blooded and pressed
to breathe, again, please again,
the lid rolls private; make sure

I think you were stitched
over the eye, but there are
only lashes here
**collage, black glass frame**

black on black, a two
dimensional mountain lies
on the sweat skinned sky

you are all black, the
back of an eyelid, I tell
you, I’m going blind

this forgets like a
vine, green on the brain, ripe
and drowning fruitless
empty skybound benches or primal scream therapy

it was lush when I
got there, see the pictures from
the red ferris wheel

the hospital across
watches the water coming
like dreams on repeat

upshore I paid ten
dollars, roughly, for one
ticket, held up one

finger even though
I know all the numbers now,
that is all I know,

one circle of red
babble, an airforce target,
flaming circus hoop
illiteracy, camouflage

I walk between two
kanji-shaped bus stops, think
about jumping ship
myopia, blood function, release

wanted a closer
look at the army-navy
hospital inside

I knew I wouldn’t
hear your baby screams or find
the rusted forceps

how could I explain
at the gate what I wanted,
how far I’d traveled

enough to see the
doctor, the plastic men marching
from concrete houses

this finality
in ducts, vents, lays your dusted
hand on my shoulder
hollow-boned scaffolding

in church I draw wings
held on with backpack straps, a
transfiguration

they unfold, fill like
parachutes, slow us into
our inky new lives
island-bound birds

coaded up skin cracks, heaves
    a bloody atomizer
tarred and drowning

on deck. swab, starboard
rig the body open, quick!
quiet is on fire.

island-bound birds, we
drink up the small, loaded boat
shove organs aside,

we dance like sugar
marrow and wash ashore, our
bones laced like hands pray.
after wondering whether my taxes pay for upkeep of the city temple, and

whether or not you will meet me there if I wait long enough (I)

walk this fishgut lined
street to its crisis, expect
some phantom limb pain

consider: is this
thought-speech deification
of you, revenant?

think about praying
instead, dear God, could you please
take down a message

reserve a temple
bench and settle on mouthing
eastward to your ear
treatise on drowning, or: for two voices in 5/4

a new prophetess
dreamed it from the red apex
of a carnival

cranial plate shift
or earthquake buries the ferris
wheel across the street

waits in bed for your
father; wants to check your flight,
he insists on sleep

subterfuge at best
the brain mutes every song I
remember. I spar.

soothsayer sleeps sound,
remembers after take-off
to warn us of heights

who writes the end if
ending is proof enough, red
ferris wheel, red flight

(the pink postcards come
after) I move to your room
someone leaves the door

superimposed photos
open your cliff red with a
water wheel, your ash

griefblinded prophet,
how could you have known, the fault
lines start to rupture
hanami (a verbal definition)

The car is idling
in front of a single tree,
white like suicide.

Clutch at the prime in
water, the kamikaze.
This is life ethereal,

that X might catch flame,
sear your corneas, cauterize
the remainder.
before the resurrection

the pulsing organ
an incubated egg veins,
blasts the basted shell
basins for the remainder

I’ll come home to you on Easter and lie in the warm season some time

fold myself into the rootless ground, exhale and show you the gut

of the matter, cut the staples, roll out the viscous bobbin, read aloud.
an isomer for blood sugar

dream-side we wade through
tightly packaged words, boxes
full of slow blood, calm.

backstroke through our names
and thick urgency lapping
heavy on our chests

we’re in honey, my
eyelids snotted shut, you sing
us softly to sleep
gaping

our skeletal birds
circle concentric by strings,
pinched and taut they lift

these hollow bones flute
from center, sing breathy hymns
with fingers tingling

you and I read sky,
circle single wingedly
taste air in our eyes
hanami

A parking lot full
white to the knees. The station
looks on longingly.

Its lover, skeletal,
clean and alone, stands deep
in her dropped laundry.
HANAMI
in the green of second years

We could be blocked together in old stone: the elephant of the dream, mossed over on the east side. If the cement, in its wet infancy had known. If the genesis of solid eyes and tusks had also mapped bowls of space to cup us from disintegration, green and flowering.

Readied, you would spin the pillows, pull palm fronds across the door. I would unfold viney, follow east to east unraveling, to know its stony mouth.
Hanami

The car is idling in front of a single tree white like suicide. Clutch at the prime in water, a kamikaze. This is life ethereal, that X might catch flame, sear your corneas, cauterize the remainder.
Instructions in English

Stop trying to cross the street. While underground, Seoul will shift and you will never surface on the side with Starbucks, never. The riot police will give you furtive directions, hands over their batons and you’ll be afraid to duel them with your map. You should bow, but how low, how many times? The International Committee on Deferentially Inclined Positions has no official position: you look like a bobble-head toy. Stop it. At kitty-corner: Nam Dae Mun. If you get there, hold your face like a sign that reads, “passing through, just hungry.”
Ho Chi Minh is a tiled room full of border guards and stamps, a cement-floored annex of short and slender stalls, a slowly filling bucket and rag. CAUTION, an ATM, $15 to crack bones, $4 fries. Japanese tourists will break bottles of ketchup and apologize, but not profusely.
Train stations, but not trains, are illegal in Kaohsiung. Most use miniature trampolines provided by Kaohsiung Transit Authority to propel them into moving cars. Parachute sales have skyrocketed. Imports from Siem Reap are highly sought-after collector’s items – private collections are stored in liquid at room temperature and best viewed from a supine position.
Gion is a paper lantern woman with wood-paneled arms and orange, lacquered ribs. Her arms are slender, slide with splintery ease but only at eye level, into tea rooms. They would gesture to your men, if you had any.
On the Tonlé Sap, baskets of grease writhe, full of crickets and fuzzy burnt spiders. Whole, legs delicately maneuvered to conserve each tiny hip, each socket clutches the crunching nail. Bodies hollowed, filled with saucy guts – the mechanics of tireless fingers make cuisine of red food rations. The severed leg catches in your gullet, flutters and swabs the esophageal elevator, points its single finger at your hunger, ferry side.
The music coming from Shinjuku next door signals street-crossing at angles; birds-eye: a human asterisk. Between the concrete strata is a layer of thick mochi for absorbing shock and aftershock, and can be eaten in cases of emergency. Tourists are given free travel-sized trowels and a preponderance of illegible pocket tissues.
A corner kiosk selling dog heads houses \( \frac{1}{2} \) of Phnom Penh’s population. Greasy tarp frayed for fringe provides the rotisserie-side residences with shade.
Mounds of clothes and bone surface in the dust. High school becomes a museum. Japanese tourists are scarce.
Assimilation

Ume-boshi puckers, a pair of overripe and vinegared lips, a plum, a peach, a peck of pickled, wait for the sting in the glands, wash it down in a salivary swallow, coo for rice or explode darling pigeon, you don’t stand a chance.
International House of Pancakes

In the room with windows there are bulk bins full of babies you appease with plastic fruit and plastic blueberry pancakes. Deal tiny plastic spatulas to each of your dexterous and stylishly dressed mothers and together serve up cardinals, pan flipped to their berry correlative. Most babies find them irresistibly delicious. Your days filled with insatiable counting, evening short-stack orders, one for baby, one for mother, one for baby, etc. until the smallest reaches across the table, helps himself to your pancakes, spits out his first word; (yes) it’s in English.
Miyuki

Miyuki is a large woman, she’ll admit it, “I’m a large woman,” and when she forces you to dress in her purple velvet sleeveless, you become a heavy parachute, a plum kept from the icebox. She has investors waiting to bow low and make your acquaintance, see if you’ll sell on TV and if you’re genki enough for children to buy into you. You’ll shave your upper lip because you know you’re the prettiest in the line-up, wear men’s boxers and dance like a chicken. Miyuki eats chocolate, never thanks you for the jumbo-sized box because she’s been to Costco in America. She’s a large woman, she’ll admit it.
Obachan

Obachan says ego wakarimasen. Totemo. Stuttering around the house about the trash, about the recycling, she points to the fan. Then to you. PALM-splats a fist-sized spider you hadn’t noticed in the wood of the old-house. Just slide the door closed. She’ll go back to sleep, or to drink, or tell someone who can translate that she’ll be making nasubi, which means, roughly, that you should order pizza.
Pause two strokes into the oil – she’ll ask where are you from and do you like a Japanese men? Be ready to eat squid in a single spongy bite and talk to relatives in Hawaii. You are a business lunch in the garden, but they’re done with sushi and want to eat the model.

The President of the International Bank of Japan has strong ancestry, he tells you. You nod.
Hoisted

Sometimes it’s a parade and bankers in fundoshi carry you overhead on wooden slats. Your roommate thinks it’s a striptease and calls you Jane, but the man you love is white and covering his butt with a speedo. It’s too late, a sea of naked hands writhes westward under the slats and you remember drowning. The pilgrimage, the hospital where he was born and the ferris wheel across the street. Two blocks short of sand the sea will stop drop and roll you back home anyway. Dionysus hands Hades his pants.
Lupin

Lupin thinks you’re cute and everyone in the office knows it. He walks you to the Mini-Stop for ice cream, but you can’t recall how you know that he plays the guitar - they won’t tell you in English, and you don’t know that word. Carrots are good, he says, because he’s not a little boy anymore, and where did you get this Ranch Dressing? We would swim in its whiteness if we could fit in the bowl. Someone says kareeeohkee and you deftly translate, kara oke, the empty orchestra swells and you lean in for another carrot. You’ll both have excellent eyesight, but only you will know why.
Nojiriko

In the mountains there aren’t bathrooms and you’ll have to go to a ski-lodge to bathe. Rotemburo, she tells you, is the reason why you’re steaming naked outside. Men are separate, but six days later you see them clumped at the two-story window. The high price of root vegetables is an elderly tour where the mute is assumed dumb. She pretends to be outraged, dries your back where you can’t reach. The sakura line is south and moving.
Bonsai

The harbor is a shoebox full of bonsai trees and everyone is the size of lego men, except. This is no Jack-and-the-Beanstalk story, though your golden locks, now those might be magic. If a little white dog asks you to lunch, turn and walk back down the planks. Then:
Think fast sprint cherry bomb off the long end.
Check the weather before you book tickets. There are no refunds if the water turns to charcoal under your fingers.
Meme

You find out three months later that her real name isn’t Meme, after the huge, almond eyes she carries; it’s Sadako: whose strokes mean, respectively, cancer, crane, casualty. Bronze skyward arms at the memorial. But she is none of these things. Meme repeats your name in writing like a tiny echoing heartbeat separated with commas she learned in Australia, learns the rhythms of eyelids, knows the treble your glass.
A pull-down map

The children in Kan-onji will call you question or a crayon, call you a master of questions, and speak in crayons except when asking if you like potato chips. They will offer you potato chips and prawns. Scratch that. They will offer you potato chips that taste like prawns and a scratch-n-sniff sticker from a ledger in the glass genkan. Across the street she says she can’t have children and you expect her to pull down maps of ovaries, cross sections of pelvises, locate failure, but it’s a waiting room not a chip factory and you have to get back to class.
Hanami

Chicken nuggets become the currency of cherry sauce at the American embassy, but you are no spring chicken. You can’t economize when it comes to familiarity, a bridge in the roof of your mouth, a memory bank filled with golden arches.
Study her arms, upper lip, her eyelids: she’ll teach you about Isamu Noguchi, translation and bridges for months before you realize she’s completely hairless. Bald under hair you’ve complemented and thought cut. Lithe. Her blood type means she’s afraid of driving, prefers language to engagement, will have a loveless marriage to a man who sells sports equipment. She demurs because her follicles are closed and then hand delivers 20-year-old post cards of Kochi, the beach where the samurai disemboweled himself.

Shino
Mika

The good ol’ boys yakiniku joint server waits on: yakuza like uncles with machine guns. Her heels are like ankles with machine guns. But you’ve never seen her. You just drive past the red flagged door where he said it happened and now he’s staining your tatami. Get him a tissue. The flowers, at least, are gone.
A Lottery

At the mini-mart you unwittingly play the lottery and win a hello kitty cosmetics bag. This is translated badly. Someone suggests a victory lap down the aisle, and why not? You think of filling your new bag with tiny turkeys or Cornish game hens - smaller - Supermarket sweep style, then making a break for it, hopping the train to Marugame where you could live on your sushi-sized foul, plan your next move.
By Law

By law all vehicles must remain at the white line for two full cycles of the traffic signal before proceeding through, if, on the left hand, a tall blonde with uncovered shoulders is waiting for the hand to turn into a white man. Wait for her signal: the blonde knot will unfold over itself like a flag under the rising sun.
Hanami

A parking lot full white to the knees. The train station looks on longingly. Its lover, skeletal, deep in her dropped laundry.
Near-drowning is a term used to describe almost dying from suffocating under water. It is the last stage before actual drowning, which often results in death. Near-drowning. Medically reviewed by Stacy Sampson, D.O. Written by Kristeen Moore. Updated on September 29, 2018. Causes. Symptoms. Definition of drowning in the Idioms Dictionary. drowning phrase. What does drowning expression mean? Definitions by the largest Idiom Dictionary. Like this video? Subscribe to our free daily email and get a new idiom video every day! a drowning man will clutch at a straw. proverb Someone who is desperate will try to use anything for help, even if it is really no help at all. Facing the possibility that his marriage might be over, John began visiting psychics to help him decide what to do. A drowning man will clutch at a straw. An update on drowning in 2018 | Drowning is a significant and neglected public health problem mostly affecting young children. The definition of drowning has recently been | Find, read and cite all the research you need on ResearchGate. An update on drowning in 2018. September 2018. Revue médicale suisse 14(617):1565-1567. The instinctive drowning response is an instinctive reaction that occurs in humans when close to drowning. While distress and panic may sometimes take place beforehand, drowning itself is quick and often silent. A person close to the point of drowning is unable to keep their mouth above water long enough to breathe properly and is unable to shout. Lacking air, their body cannot perform the voluntary efforts involved in waving or seeking attention. Involuntary actions operated by the autonomic nervous system help keep the body upright. Discover the symptoms of both wet drowning and dry drowning, and learn how to protect young children from drowning in pools, as well as lakes, rivers, and oceans. All victims of drowning should be evaluated by a health care professional.