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Belong to the Past in a Loud Future Tense

Author(s): Olive Zhong

Email: fz54@kent.ac.uk

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Belong to the Past in a Loud Future Tense

Olive Zhong

An Ambivalent Surrender

Her eye has a bone in it.
Her words are quieter than the timid scent
Of the silence of shade-in-shade.

No place to rest weariness
And paradox. the aftertaste of
An inside sting: thickening repeating

Despair has a thousand fangs yet a single soft tongue
Whispering: continue continue
Squirming in the swamp of the ever present tense.

Pain circles afresh.
An overhead beam, a rope and a noose
Are too meek to hold the weight of her ordeal:

Told untold
Her autobiography continues
With herself being absent.

Landscape

The night woke up cold in
a gauzy dress.

Through the maze of spider webs
all the children
gaze at the square moon
turning into the scent of buttercups.

Night, stretched far and deep,
 lies on the river.
And the shyness of a frog
 flows and flicks.

Discrete, Deep and Dark in the Past

Memory ruptures
to a continuous separation
in an aged story:

... Another thorn in parents' talks
... a moment of sporadic rosy nostalgia
incognito as a dream-like name.

Childhood, the word,
fluid and solid,
has a dim wound in it.

Fat rain cannot swallow
the serrated voices in which
another glass is shattered.

Tired feet again step into their quarrels,
open and wild as weather. Turbulent air
unobtrusive as the change of days.

The alphabets themselves, after sunset,
thread dazzling, intimate
poems.

So much
depends on
belongs to

Solid Memory, Volatile City

fireflies glittering with fragments
through the scrim of memory
loose fraying lingering
the perimeter of desolation
skyline and childhood is now
open volatile scenic
on the edge, calla lilies find the bone
of an echo from the pristine and returning
waiting and mirage
in an old wheelbarrow's shadow
a black bird pecks the remote hums.
resolute reverberative
time is dressed up
with labyrinth and diplopic shelves.
a snapshot of scent of forget-me-not

An Incomplete Life in a Complete Autumn: Aunty Lian

Sweet corn stalks, patient and lonely as a rock cairn,
Glance towards the sore direction:
Lian's motionless body dangled, weightless
From a sycamore, like a kite caught on a power line.
She lay as snipped orchid petals in the coffin.
The fresh bruises made by her husband were piercingly vivid.
Her mother made the chafing longing
Magnanimously accurate and delicate

A phial of weep was injected into the
The ear of nights. She was still awake when the second moon
Came out in the morning. The mutating pain undulated
Through her body clock and sight.
Yet time was gracefully scabbing.
Salubrious nostalgia, like non sequiturs, trickled in.
There was a lotus in Lian's name. The onomatopoeia
Of its blossoms was rising and echoing.