

Phantom Inhabited Phantom

by R. Salvador Reyes

Here In The Fold Of Our Time

Something so alive
It was something
So afraid. These are the latest
Failures from the dispatch. Being
Is all that will save us left. There is not enough
For anything else. Free your ghost from its
Mimic life. These are the latest failures from
The dispatch. Something so alive it was your ghost
Free from its mimicked life. We were saved
Once from its darkness and won't
Be after to wish back and ask again. Being is all
That will save us left. Come
Down. Lie on the earth for you. Get under
The rain that will drown you. What could you care about more
Than the onliness of this?
What chosenness comes to the aloneness?
These are the latest failures from the dispatch.
All the eyes have them. A concurrence for the haven
Of love, of the wrapped in to be enclosable, a known
Space that won't betray its falseness. Each moment destroying
Its former. All the eyes hurtle what we have. All the numbers
We have will come through and be
Short of it. Its all spent at last. All the eyes see it
When looking but don't see it. Every
Contradiction is equal to or greater than the truth.

These are the latest failures from the dispatch. This is the thing
That came to you when everything else left. When you were only here and knew it only. When the air
Sloughed off from the universe and left you
There. When the things you were muddled themselves
Away and left you there. When every number failed to be restrained, went on without
You, held fast the fabric of the place that has no place for you. Hurling
Away. The frame and the fabric
Indomitable, weakless toward
Its infinite destination. Being
Is all that will save us left. These are the latest
Failures from the dispatch. Something so alive
It was something so afraid.
Being is all that will save us left.
Here in the fold of our time.

**Riddle Of The Glyphs
In Our Temple
Of This Universe**

Imagine it like the ocean rolling

Out in all directions from the Bang, the tsunami of everything unleashing, carving

Time's catacombs into its dimensions, the uncollapsing

Moment, each end begun, each now bound. Imagine you

In its wake. • YOU ARE HERE. Imagine

You as the ocean; your thoughts in

The wake. Filling

In the blank. What are you?

We found us here in the hour
We joined. Unrepentantly small and wishing to be among, to gather the force of it into
Our smallness, to take in the morning as it was. Imitation of the boundless and other
Compensations reach between the fathoms of this crevice. These branches
Shimmer, stretch, and schism
Out to their ends, each descending
Circumference a smaller incarceration
Of the longing until the cell's infinitesimal voice goes numb at echo's end. A tree downslicing
Filets of sweetbread, soil flowers in its blood, emerging from mind's gaped
Flesh into a chasm of such blunt open terrifying air of entirety. Each plumule
Invaded and devoured through fissures pried
Wide by the outcroppings of wonder and seek, corrupted
Scaling vine-tying the part that knew itself, unencumbered.

The Assembly Of Memory When It Returns & Disappears

The morning floundered, a flickering station on the radio, an ember flaring for air.
Today you are alive. He said this.
Every blossom flashed into the concreting filaments of the moment.
Something sprung from the mouth of it, frozen in its desire to arrive.

The Diaspora

He had walked past
The beacon of boot-worn dirt & matted needles, the break
In the woods beside the road, dozens
Of times & wondered: *where?* But it wasn't
Until he finally asked the neighbor—near the ends
Of their driveways, clambering down the steep blacktop
With his garbage bins, balancing the weight of things
Unknown & discarded against his skidding
Gait—that he learned the trail through the small
Cluster of forest wound all the way
To town, was covered by an easement, but took much
Longer than following the road, wasn't often traveled.
And his first time on the trail he was
Alone. The evening quivered. He anteloped
Between the brush, slicing switchbacks through
Shore, the bays that smuggle the seeping Young redwoods, old madrones & maples down to
Sea between fertile memories
The bubbling street below & its effervescing
Of mountains—all of it drew him Lamps, which he had seen at first from a distance, up
Like a molecule to the rest The hillside, through the Rorschach leaves.

Eons ago, when that oceanic
Plate dove deep into the ribs
Of America unborn, driving out
Of earth the Nevadan Oregon—granite
Impaled from the land & a place
Became. That cast stone along the western
Shore, the bays that smuggle the seeping
Sea between fertile memories
Of mountains—all of it drew him
Like a molecule to the rest
Of itself. Ocean valence tore
Him from the prairie.
So he took the trail whenever he could. Because it was
Why he was here: mist between trees, the trace
Of sea displacing into the lowest atmosphere & riding
Over a ridge through the green. And he wanted to find himself
There, in a forest with ocean nearby.

She came out of the water
That way, mermaidian, a new beautiful
Creature for the air. Livening grace fused & awash in
The cold foam surf. He lusted. And it was after
That in his sport wagon behind a dune feathered
With the tall grass. Across the back seat, her legs
When his collection Dangling out an open door, damp
Of life was still small & Bodies pressed. And the hunger fed
Blankful, an echoing Another mind to the universe, their little girl.
Box awaiting its phalanx
Of crayons: his mother poured
Pancake batter onto the hissing
Griddle & fried bacon in
The snapping pan, played
Joni Mitchell songs that sewed
The kitchen's piquant air. It all braided
In him: the voice, the light, the noise, the taste
Of breathing the unfindable morning.
And somewhere in the middle
Of his life, the verdant patch
With her & the little girl: a bright-splash
Saturday morning emerged & they heard
Joni on the radio & he thought he knew
What was to come when the little voice
Demanded blueberries & he tucked her
Into a fuzzy coat with bear ears, gathered all
Four years of her in his arms, galloped
Off & chased away for fruit.

They walked together, the man & the little girl, going
After blueberries for pancakes along the trail through
The woods beside the ocean one Saturday morning. He
Wrapped her tiny hand in his, a seed safe in the flesh
Of its fruit. And the sunlight dropped in clusters between
The trees. The noise of different birds chattered
In branches. Wind bustled. Then the plate of earth beneath
Leaned into another. Ground clattered. Trees
Shook & wept leaves—limbs & trunks
Topped through air, scattered themselves on the churning
Floor of the planet while she crouched
Beneath him, clutching a denim leg, herself the tiny
Frozen creature on the hillside when
The land rattled its hinge. He pretended
He could protect her. And when the shudder abandoned, they
Inhaled the sight: a forest forelorn & asunder, freshly
Snapped stumps, stillness of stunned air, every
Twig & downed bough a monument
Of the new world cast in broken light, forensics
Of the dismantled, everything fallen like dancers after
The dance, like detritus of refugees after
The minds fled, a singing unsung to its notes.

She carried it nearly
A century, the sight, a moment
That came back when
Certain cells fired—one
Morning in the closet of a lover
When a door slammed &
The shelves shook. And one morning, near
The end, when the bed beneath
Her rattled with the footfalls
Of those few she loved who were left.

Tonight we will not consider
The universe. We'll escape

On our way in. To this weightless
Vessel, its immediacy

Undulating, always unabandoned
By us. The current under

Our heads that takes us
To ourselves. The joy is. We will

Live there tonight. For less than time
Matters inside this frail hull, porous

Almost to nothing, but calamitous,
Intransigent, a membrane to hold
All things between

You & the sea.

You & The Sea

We Are Confined By All We Love

Her body was in
The suitcase in the bay water near an avenue. The suitcase
With her body inside floated. A boy
Saw the shape of it around
Her, there, drifting
Into the rocks. Two days in the water following
Her lifetime. On the day of the evening
That her body was shoved into
The container, she bought two Wild Hearts
Two-dollar scratchers and a SuperLotto with her
Virginia Slims. The clerk smirked when she said *Luck*
Won't find ya if ya don't go lookin'. Sometimes in the evenings
Her daughter called. But she tried not to hope
For it, to let the discovery be found
Pleasure each time.

Lightning flowers

In branches carried by the storm. But in the photograph, you

Can see none of them

Are thinking about it—not the grandson or his wife, the great-granddaughters, the immigrant son, the daughter-in-law. They

Didn't know. That those doom-hither ocean-born

Clouds, sooted and fierce, Poseidoning in behind them over the Pacific

Toward the shore where they stood—ambered

In time—those clouds fell against sky the same as

Those that chased and overcame

Him one bleak evening in the dead

Center of that gaping deep sixty years before. He & his First Mate helming the vast

Cargo vessel that shunted between frothing antlers of the sea ahead into

The split-apart night and the carnage of violent atmospheres. They

Would never know. And he was long gone.

Lightning Flowers In Branches Carried By The Storm

The rain is lit
This way because it was
Witnessed. A muffled illuminated
Sheen. A mind
In the noise. A transient
Witness. Every unpurchased droplet
Soaked in and gone. Fed
And washed away. We make the river
Of remainders. We make our memory
Of a river. Silence,
The witness & rain,
The torrent. Every
Day buries its time.

Living In The Lost

**And So The Story Sets Sail Here
In This Confluence Of All The Time That Will Have Been Her Life**

The yarn that will make her is
Beginning now. Maybe this happened
Last week, maybe in months: the first frame of surviving
Filmstrip, catalogued, retrievable, seared. Now
Is the raveling. The conundrum
Of thought & flesh. She teeters
Herself, tiny
On the precipice, gleaming. Now
Her ghosts will be born into
Mind. Light will take all forms. All the places
Will be told. Melancholy will seep
Every memory through it. The light
Will change
Again. And all of the words
Will put themselves together—end to end to end to end, a cacophony
Of pantomimes & magic, solace, regret, a sentence
Clambering holy & fraught onto this strand of world in the vanishing universe. And it will be
Like this or in some other unexplainable, that the light will
Cast, the hours
Will persevere, and it will all have
Its voice, unleashing
Through the threshold of this life.

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