

From DISTANT LANDSCAPES (1)  
Jane Joritz-Nakagawa

burrowing in the earth            to find a real world  
    beneath the fictitious ones

                          walking into ruin      damaged birds move  
thru eccentric skies

    to grasp a feeling of home  
                                  of a secret reverberating self      this is  
not an exit

<echo poetics>

I become the tree tho it does not become me. Each branch of a temporarily retrieved memory of a hypersensitive poet with a stormy personality blown apart by tonight's rain. Down the street workmen build a house in the forest for the wealthy, eating lunch in dirty trucks shoes off white stockinged feet hanging out car windows ramen in styrofoam cups and throwaway chopsticks. It's impossible to know the forest's prerequisites. A large owl flies over the young grass the plump brown rabbit ate yesterday. The poem finally accepts the reverberations of the forest. There's an operatic grammar to be found among birds and insects, but language cannot stop to find it. The hills only appear to be tragic. Once glance is never enough. How the forest haunts me. Each night I dream a blade of grass. My heart becomes hollow and everything becomes wilderness. It's precisely here where my thoughts turn to plywood.

i marry the tree but have sex with the river  
inside a prison of leaves  
today's pain the same as yesterday's  
while androgynous flowers bloom naively

vomiting up oceans  
seeds stick to my seaweed hair  
between blades of young grass  
the legs of a hairy animal

celestial solace  
suspicious pond  
ornamental objects  
in a pool of language

i differ to beg  
suffocating light  
wafting of prayer  
abruptly anonymous

shifting wafer of light  
unconsoled toxicology  
blaze of compulsion  
etched in foreign silence

extinguished light  
furious fakery  
spoken to oneself  
a heaving of language

expelled whorl  
after yesterday  
just cause  
tubal ligation

pleading consciousness  
passing by the window  
manufactured evidence  
dead dog

facet of illness  
stick of bamboo  
forlorn photograph  
dredging the swamp

face of a tree  
visual hegemony  
a cloud shrinks  
my cold neck

statue in a park  
root compression  
migratory birds  
spread pain thruout my body

the wind's melody becomes nothing  
falling into rain  
cemetery of bodies  
a rudimentary form of landscape

my coat is torn cotton  
i wish it was sable  
a random form of landscape  
distress call

waiting for architecture  
to give me unity and purpose  
tho the newspaper confuses me  
i continue to read it

i sense rubber dolls  
are cleaning up the planet  
but i'm stuck for hours

opening envelopes of missing letters

space between moments  
the motion inside my body  
a deserted hill  
seemingly wayward

flowers shaken violently by wind  
doctrine of amnesia  
facile compassions  
where grass should be dense

i thought the more  
info the better  
counting the trees  
how much do they cost

dead raccoon dog on side of road  
pools of sludge fast beating heart  
horrible waiting in a coffee shop longing for  
the haunted forest  
i couldn't endure the chatter of  
the people next to me  
and regretted leaving the cold sad  
lonely violent forest

the trees are starting to panic  
a radio broadcast makes no sense in a language i used  
to know leaves of the tree  
each falling syllable elongated flowers  
harbor bees intent on killing the rest of the living  
deader than wood  
i wonder what to say to the tree and am  
certain the rabbit is lonely  
why does it return to the same patch of grass  
behind the tree more trees flowers gone

i try to let the forest hide me certain the owl  
has eaten the rabbit  
why doesn't it come to the house anymore

a sun popping out summer doesn't fit why do they  
have a festival my head  
makes a strange sound a cloud emanates  
from my body in a moment of evaporated  
happiness your heart was on my sleeve  
a tree stole our language my body floats like  
lost ethics within a sea of desire  
filled with the rhythm of the forest tho i prefer  
the sky romantic and melancholy

to act in a way that appears to be coherent take out  
the sun narrative making the forest

possible      sad acceptance of reality  
future as repetition and decay      poorly functioning  
tree the forest making the temple  
obsolete      moving with painful swiftness  
why won't trees stop waving      which memories  
die when we do      the rhythm of the forest  
floating above me      to act in a way      trees  
would approve of

stalemate

soul          disarranges

mixed with sea

sweet thigh

of an animal

leash in bowl  
rice on hill

slanted morning sky

tree tops    spindly and

darkening

gash of red

foamy peaks

hunt in packs

moments can't be grasped

antlers of a stag

a rabbit eats the young grass

abandoned

a boundary set

a sun passing over slowly





(i dreamt i bought a tiny patch of grass  
in the city for 100,000 yen)  
dying from exposure to elements of emotion  
beasts of the earth are human make a gaza  
striptease  
traces of the forest leave alone as they came  
voices of the forest gather as if trees appeared a  
deer emerges  
tree within me darkening water some  
figure/form  
silent tragedy from behind the trees  
to be beaten and empty filled then  
depleted  
fleeing attracted to the dark  
only eyes visible from opposite sides  
moving imperceptibly  
to keep from getting lost a  
thickening veil of trees  
on auto pilot beyond what words say  
interrupted by rain  
an eye waits silently under a fuzzy hood  
no one calls the birds  
they hit glass windows  
approximating the sky and fall  
profiles of trees  
a wind gives flight to voiceless plants trees  
without roots  
reproduce silence how dark it is  
but no one lives within this time

(the forest fades) (or i do) feel myself falling in the  
encrypted forest  
matched by the violent wind mirror neurons  
the impossibility of entering the forest

i decide to begin eating the forest, starting with a  
small patch of grass  
the rabbit did not eat (costing ten thousand yen)

one cannot enter the mind of the forest  
as in a film where it's always night and wet  
if i act in a manner in which the forest approves  
it could make me pathetically happy

garden party take pictures of flowers worn on tee  
shirts

names scratched with a knife into a tree living or just  
surviving before the linguistic wilderness  
becomes a giant noise

tree locked in the trunk of a car behung  
with shiny objects  
moist with imaginary dew the tall  
meadow grass  
doesn't disappoint me as you do

sorrow hangs from trees who regret  
what could have been  
the road is too narrow squeezing me  
dry  
i can hardly walk among the poplars

a dark street terrorizing  
everyone concrete

buildings with striped awnings  
garish letters

it's time for

yoga or aerobics

a fable i once heard

in the city

tho my head is in the (frightening) forest

and a corpse

within me