

In Defence of Impatience

Don't go—excuse the nuisance I flaunted
when we strolled along Victoria Harbor
back on the twelfth of May. Pardon
the hastiness, my lack of composure,
a lark's compulsion to sing before
and keep singing after the first light
undercuts the dark. I might have shown
my plume too soon, but it's my way of
listening. I did rehearse my lines
but didn't know how to pace them—
what metre, what caesurae, what perfect
scansion? I sputtered as if words were
cinders on my tongue, and I had to dunk
myself in turbid water, and every piece
of clothing I wore was soaked, and I
must bring them to a dry place, a pyre
for the hour the night would condense to.
Such eagerness for now is my body
temperature, a soul-furnace, an energy
pure and sustainable for the time being,
because the only thing burning is
the coals rolling in my stomach.
My hand raking the air, should I say here,
say love, say we're running out of time?

A Night of Evolution

Horizontal rain and apartment buildings dissect the sky into indigo squares.
So much dampness a swarm of jellyfish transgresses, weaving through the traffic.
Even the cotton trees, heroic with straight branches, yield like seaweed.

Somewhere, waves, splaying electric green, wash up a collection of sea bodies
onto the promenade.

Many die instantly—I'm certain—deflated and disfigured
by air pressure and the grace of gravity, but who knows?

Maybe one ignites, exerts himself, and clambers to the grass
with newfound wings. Maybe the creature swallows his gills,
decides to breathe in oxygen, and nests in a nearby bush.

I shall not be surprised, if wind, water, and earth fuse with a spark,
if I saunter along the shore tomorrow and discover an amphibian,
rainbow-colored and chameleon-like, regurgitating bones of what used to be
a stray dog.

I remember newness, the moment of arrival, the kismet
of being chosen from the deep, the sure emergence.