

Morning and Evening Unmoving

I was there when he died. I saw the sun, like a poem
boiled down to a spot, shimmering on the opposite wall.
He said, *continue*. A cup was there on the table
with an orange straw. Now he was completely changed
and all stories lost their beginnings. With eyes shut,
his hands trembled. He was the narrator, even though
his abdomen had contracted since a few months ago
and now was beneath the blanket. His gray, broom-like
pubic hair. I wrapped his hand in mine so the weight of
two objects overlapping could reveal the connection
between the silent family members. We didn't talk
eventually; the beeping from the heart rate monitor
ironed the room flat. Now the son trimmed his nails,
placed him on the toilet, aimed the shower head
at his hair so it was released, then parted. He
was timid, never a decision-maker. Mostly silent
yet somehow romantic, he felt he had long wandered alone
in his language. His rural background made him notice
those who came home exhausted, or that lying on the hospital bed
and smoking might help him ignite the pine needles deep in the snow.
If few people came, if those old faces wore
the masks of childhood, and repeated the ghost stories one by one
he would have more time to dig deep into the cement wall.
I felt, for a second, that his breath rested somewhere
away from his chin, those cultivated rice paddies
gave out the shimmer of a plow, even the scar
on his lower belly became puddles on his body.
People came and left, bringing carts and yellow bags
under the glaring sun; the sun scorched horizontally
through the grooves inside the glass. This is a story
about the passing of a boy's father. This story predicts
that the moon that night would shine once again.