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Ashes of Home

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts

in

Creative Writing and Writing for the Performing Arts

by

Evangeline Estolas Ganaden

June 2011

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The Thesis of Evangeline Estolas Ganaden is approved:

Committee Chairperson

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Water

Yellow blinking hand. Aguray ka, Ma. You reel in her impatience before it sets her onto the road at just the wrong time. Broadway and Del Mar streets in a corner of San Gabriel. With its scattered oaks. Its Mission and accompanying bells. Two-bedroom houses and detached garages on strict grids. 50's apartment complexes holding on to their molding. Smattering of hamburger joints. Two minutes and ten cars passing, you hold her hand across hoping she remembers it's not like the Philippines. Not just

in the weather when she says it's sometimes too cold or too hot here for her bones. Or when she's craving marunggay, kap-pi or bisukol and gets lost in the fish fryers and under vegetable bins searching for them in Asian stores. Here, you are not to scuttle between buses and cars, knitting a trail of honks and curses. Tang-ina! Singit nang singit! Wait. There are rules

knocking chaos into order—marbles rolling and lining up against a wall. Except they are not her marbles. Nor yours. I-press mo diyay button, Ma. In English

and Ilocano. Ilocano and Tagalog. Tagalog and Spanish and English and Ilocano. Words summoning the amalgam of conquerors in your country—first the Spaniards, then the Japanese, the Americans, then yourselves. It is pancit and hotdogs together. Sweet spaghetti with catsup. You make do

with what you have. In Guatemala a year earlier, you are buying a basket for her. ¿Cuantos? ¿Cuanto? Perdón, mi Español no es bueno. The colors at the market in Chichicastenango are alive, sailing towards you. Dancing with the wind. Light as the basket. Smelling like earth and sky and knee-high water feeding rice shoots in the paddies

of Ilocos and Ifugao, Igorot men and women bent at the waist planting them, their bahag and tapiz woven in similar colors but different patterns. Running red strips of honor. Courage in yellow and zigzags. Fertility in green. Each color, each pattern a story rushing you then fading as you finger the knots in the basket. Similar and different. And you wonder now, holding her hand, grilled onions in the air, if you are both

here or someplace else.

I. Bone and Fragments

dance



Bone of Bone, 1

She writes with water. Sea among words. In the morning her paper boat has capsized, spilling what is negotiated within its borders. Of all the rain, of all the leaves, it is her father. The architecture of sand. A femur, a clavicle, what everything comes to. A church door opens its heavy wooden mouth spitting songs of grace. Water in its well in the baptistery, a stream flowing down the nave, to pour life it is believed. It was years after she keened. He is in his wheelchair the way she remembers a cathedral, a sanctuary.

Bone of Bone, 2

Because you both sense the inadequacy of pears when what you mean is the accent of green Manila mangoes ripening, the sour speculating its sweetness. Does leaving home wreck all its walls? A word thrown without care—*mother*, followed by *hate*. Is it this shore? You wonder how it has come to this, how you cannot gauge the distance it takes to see yourself in her, more lost than you are in this new country. A litany of frustrations for not being a room you can plant yourself in, for not being your father.

Dream

I pull my nails everyday, one for each day. The blue leather pouch I save them in bulges, purpled with bloodstain. A perennially running faucet that no one else hears, a tuning fork in A-sharp dwelling in my head. I have become intimate with noise and the softened tips of my fingers and toes are my silence.

Nights, I shift in bed until I fall onto seven miles of railroad tracks, absorb vibrations from wood ties and steel rails into my muscles, a lullaby.

In Baguio City, a house of windows, white paint on the sill peeled by humid air. Trapezoids of sunlight on coconut husk-polished floors are two camps. I shoot hard olive soldiers with colored rubber bands. On the enemy side, my brother crouches and when I have exhausted my wrist-full of elastic he fires. Beyond the glass, our older brother writes music on a ragged guitar. We listen for our mother's call to bathe before dinner, fly at the sound of plates and our father's humming.

After supper the ghosts of breaking sit with us.

At 3:00 each morning, glass shatters, and this landscape: sapphire and ochre swirls and the fervent black strokes of Van Gogh's *Starry Night* become labored and sag. Its round stars, curly clouds, hills, cypress, steeple, and village plunge to the floorboards from the north wall of my room. Its homes lie empty.

Before that, the murmur of a rosary locked inside the tympanic bones.

Before that, a tomb, feeling for my father.

Or soldiers or guitar strings or my mother's hand.

A lullaby derails, a west-bound train rolls into my head blowing its horn and stays.

Or rain, and no windows.

So It Is

One more 3 AM phone call. Cracks in the bottle: you wish the alcohol would pour out but it never does. The distance between a sister and brother—one gripping the bottle as he slides into the drain, the other draining, drained. How genes form: luck. His perfect nose, your short legs; his hand graced for drawing, your fingers twitching for words; you worry the windows black, he drinks. I am sorry, he always says, the voice of innumerable nights of moon and constellations dug into loam. Your eyes know the dark, know the walls of your room lean with the weight of studded heartbeats, slits of light are steel bars, gin is blood.

un-borrowed

Aa (ah):

asin *salt*
amoy *smell*
araw *sun*

Bb (bah):

bulag *blind*
babae *woman*
bahay *house*

Kk (kah):

kulay *color*
kamay *hand*
kulam *spell*

Dd (dah):

duhat *grape*
dugo *blood*
diretso *straight*

Ee (eh):

elepante *elephant*
evidensiya *evidence*
eksena *scene*

Gg (gah):

gamit *thing*
gusto *like, want*
gatas *milk*

Hh (hah):

halik *kiss*
hininga *breath*
himay *knead*

Ii (ih):

impiyerno *hell*
ilaw *light*
ilog *river*

Ll (lah):

libro *book*
langaw *fly*
liwanag *daylight*

Mm (mah):

multo *ghost*
mais *corn*
mukha *face*

Nn (nah):

ningning *brilliant*
nuno *ancestor*
nais *want*

Ng (ngah):

ngayon *now*
nguya *chew*
ngalan *name*

Oo (oh):

oo *yes*
Oktubre *October*
oras *time*

Pp (pah):

pinto *door*
para *for, stop*
pistura *countenance*

Rr (rah):

relo *watch, clock*
regalo *gift*
remedyo *remedy*

Ss (sah):

sayaw *dance*
sibuyas *onion*
silya *chair*

Tt (tah):

tao *person*
tatay *father*
tiempo *time*

Uu (ooh):

upuan *seat*
ugat *vein*
ulan *rain*

Ww (wah):

wala *none*
wakas *end*
wika *language*

Yy (yah):

yari *finish*
yaman *richness*
yanig *quake*

bigkasin itong yaman ng aking wika

Kulay

Color. Ang berde ng palay sa bukid. Kumikislap sa araw. Ang itim na baka sa ilalim ng puno. At sa tabi, nakaupo, sa kulay ko siya naaalala. *My father, among the fields drowned in hurtful green after the rain.*

Dugo

Blood. Hindi mahugasan ang dugo. Sampung taon na nakaburol. Kung man dito o doon, sa panaginip bumubukas ang ulap. *Beginning with reddish petals of azaleas, folding, layer on layer, a nod to the echoing wind, as if grief.*

Gatas

Milk. Walang gatas kaming nainom sa paglaki kundi galing sa nanay o sa lata. A yellow-eyed penguin molts, gray and white feathers floating towards sand. My body, or this moon, failing and failing.

Hininga

Breath. Paggising ko sa hapon, ang araw bumubuhos sa bintana. Hininga sa salamin at sulat-kamay. *Back when it was simple: the girl, pressed to the window, scrawling on fog, waiting nightly for her father to return.*

Ilaw

Light. Kung hawak niya ang ilaw. Kahit saan-saan mo siya hanapin. Sa yapak ng paa. Sa iyong mata, buhok, init ng ulo. Sa bawat ilalim ng bintana sa paggabi. Deep lines that inhabit your mother's skin, black soil between the toes. The slipping of midnight through the window, the intimacy of dark illuminating her shadow.

Mukha

Face. Sa mga kadilim-diliman, sa kalagitnaan ng pag-iisip, tuwing bumaba ang araw, tuwing mapatid ang ulan, sa tindahan sa kanto, kahit na sa pagbabalik doon ay nabura na rin ito, mukha na hawak sa kamay at panaginip. *Because the way the sun dips behind Lou's Liquor is so tender you can forgive yourself.*

Silya

Chair. Ang upuan niya dati: paa ng ama, kung saan idinuduyan siya. Before night holds all the light, before the small hours when I fall against the wind, ants trudge up the legs, probe stains for your crumbs like I do.

Ulan

Rain. Doon, ang ulan sa umaga, iba sa ulan sa hapon, iba sa ulan sa gabi. *But an echo falling over the eaves.*

Variations on Refuge

1.

ABSENT

SANCTUARY

What to call home:
No place;
this land not mine,
devoid,
Unmeasured, unreal:

where there is none.
Or should I say—
no shadow,
empty.
without desire, without memory.

2.

WE REGRET THE CIVILIAN DEATHS

What of the war-exploded rubble of homes? Of rooms to not exist in? And the blasted baby girl, faceless? A woman gathers what's left of her shadow on a street deserted by bombs. By nightfall, even black smoke, rising out of the wreckage, has nowhere to go.

3.

UNTOUCHED

prints in dust
in chairs sheets wind— your salt
my mouth
 these lines

where

I

failing to expunge your shadow

Still Life

after Cernuda

Is this what they call still life?
The woman, framed by the lens
off center and up close, looking down,
light from the window naming
the shadows on her face—
unquiet nights, betrayed
by lines under the eyes, fear
unspoken by pressed lips.
They intimate the absent,
what cannot be seen lying outside
the margins: her son and the lost years
after she left. To be with her,
to stitch the space between them,
to cross the same desert
she crossed, he will leave tomorrow,
at fifteen, everything
he has ever known. No bowl of fruit
here but the wall,
the corner chair, the lamp, even the air
in this room in which she sits,
is still.

Your Child

You writhe on uneven dirty floorboards
bare. Flex your legs for the best view.

Feel the pulse on slats from men
howling, stomping. Folded bills, moist

fingers, naked eyes down your skin.
You revert to pattern: run your tongue

across the roof of your mouth to taste
crack residue on numb flesh. Or

you know the routine: close your eyes to see
her, suckling. Your breasts

aching, navel bearing her toes.
You reach inside. This night

she bursts out: you stretching, opening,
tearing. You won't cry

until you hold her.



This woman's work

*Of all the things I should've said, that I never said.
- Kate Bush*

before me between rocks and ravine, my mother
a smile traces our years of rain to come
because she is not my father an infraction
these spaces my unforgiving longing
undone by wind, a white sweater,
a scarf

Heavy Circles

in the dark undo your body
skin in upended angles
to apprehend the internal distortion
you sever yourself
from your father's death
muffle the loss before the losing
be his only daughter and perfection
a line obliterating itself
rip muscle from bone until bone
until you quit coveting Mary
her impossible immaculateness
her vessel
her vagina birthing your savior
becoming a circle
becoming what Kandinsky calls a single tension
holding a multitude of tensions
mornings you ball up

II. Palm

dance



Supplication

knee and knuckle scrape the ground / a swelling
tide, swelling sky

what filament connects
this ground and its rain / its corpuscles—

In Iran, Neda falls
her eyes roll to the corners
blood flows from her nose / mouth
a growing red spider spilling down
her hair / veil
I loop it on YouTube and sob

I blow on a strand of hair
to bridge our distance / but these walls
crumble a different way

I am drawn to the difficulty
of others / my inadequacies
smaller
this ring of water on stained wood
condensing my pain
into an echo

here
freedom flung so casually
as words / words

are bread are water are wings are bullets
are words

the language of ritual shedding different

from the language of skin melanin
 blood red cells, white cells
the tiniest granule separating

the language of the body is personal

Under a sky that refuses to budge.
I do not know what it is to die.

Two days ago I jumped from five and a quarter feet and broke my thumbs.
I am hounded by a pink door with my fingerprints as a five-year old intact.
Between the reassurances of a clock ticking as if time, as if the vestiges of what
counts as sound to a damaged ear were real.

An unintended void.

In a pilfered missalette sustaining general petitions, “At nightfall, weeping enters
in, but with the dawn, rejoicing. Hear, O Lord, and have pity on me. *Señor, Dios mío,*
te daré gracias por siempre.”

testament

light failing on a night like this
there is no moon in spite

of a glow on the water's lap
pull strings to open it open

the sky float a kite through the crack
and if the breakwater breaks

as I have watched dozens of people wash into the ocean dissolving
like sugar until there is no trace of them
with the receding tide

Trafficked

And years after. In a field where grapes hang full, ready to stain, worn fingers,
and the cold moving into the bones. An unrelenting sky

sags into her shoulders. A knife edge leaving little marks on her skin, ones she
can see, she scores

her palm over predetermined lines, some of fate, some of memory. Soldiers.
Faceless men. The degree to which she remembers

herself, or subtracts herself, is this sky drifting into black, first burning,

then swallowing its ashes.

Three Stories

after Anne Carson

1.

It was this. Time hung on a tree. For twenty years a shelter, five on the streets, two train rides and a taxi—Chang Mai, they say after finding me, is as far away as this. To return to the birds in the village, some wood, eight children, forty-three grandchildren, my husband's grave, the taste of my Yawi tongue. Why did I leave, they ask. One afternoon in the fields. I pull a splinter from my palm and blood dripping on the water shapes me a map.

2.

It was this time.
Hung on a tree for twenty years.
A shelter.
Five on the streets, two train rides.
And a taxi.
Chang Mai, they say after.
Finding me is as far away.
As this.
To return to the birds.
In the village, some wood, eight children.
Forty-three grandchildren, my husband's.
Grave the taste of my Yawi tongue.
Why did I.
Leave they.
Ask one afternoon.
In the fields I pull.
A splinter from my palm and blood.
Dripping on the water shapes me.
A map.

3.

splinter the tongue
the birds leave
and the children
on a tree this time

Next

The language is missing and the color. A room of concrete and some mold, a platform to hold one body then another. Today, Taha Alhangalawi, seventeen. Arms hugging himself taped together. He died from bleeding, they said, shot in the leg as he was running. Two others. Outside it is warm, goats roaming the hills. A farmer and his son harvest figs. In a few more months, the olives.

hey

dimepiece. ur cute. m interestd. lookin 4 someone like u.

dear guy

Thank you for your text about liking my profile (how I look), you say you want to entangle our respiration; I'm stabbing the air thinking we might find the elixir of love, like berries, shade trees, dirty avocados that could suddenly fill the summer; but it's prickly, you may say, that I come from the squatters; yes, the cleavage between us is more than physical, you there, in the land of apples, and I, well, where I navigate my feet between the green of rice shoots, I will never see the aurora borealis; in fact the earth here is charred most nights by the insurgency of nightmares, the man-made kind that insist on qualitative disrepair or, how can I say, lactic disengagement: copper, oil, rust when all you want is water, our government the hybrid factories of fail—they say market for school, bus stop for hospital, concrete for women's breasts, as if passion nails (the color red) equals a lost horse (you see, it could never work), but I tell myself daisy, lullaby, ukulele, goat, and if I'm lucky, off-season flora—these might just bridge our standard deviation, or reference between us a fluid loop of pigeons flying home.

Thank you. I look forward to meeting you.

Photographer's Notes: Close Shot of Girl Against Chanakyapuri Area Fire, New Delhi

1. Mute light, not a shadow on her face.
2. Five, maybe six years old. Her irises drawn to the corners.
3. Dodge the background: few remnants of wood, cardboard, plastic sheets and their dwellers sifting through belongings, ashes.
4. f/5.6 for the sun (diffused by smoke, detached from its sky) and the wire fence clenched by her fingers, teeth (barbs digging her cheeks, brows slightly crinkled, nose flared).
5. 1/60 second. Wind blowing her hair like prayer.

In Transit

1.

The yearning that spills a melody and seduces your eyes to fly beyond the mauve and sienna dusk weaving the horizon deep into the next country. Until black roots burn behind your lids.

2.

there is no sun in Baguio
bewildered among the roads, dust, and cauliflowers
barred windows
the scarred air consuming my skin in every direction
though I would not trade any of it

3.

What wind to spread to.

4.

A hole has opened in my ear slicing
the sea, crashing with seaweed-slapping abandon
and littering my head with bits of suicide.

5.

miles and years
shaping the contours of a country
sculpting air into houses
water into baskets
though she is tethered to the lip of the sidewalk
a mole between the toes
which means, they say, she traveled
between names

Geography of leaving



it is not winter
but the air leaving
my mouth freezes
seventeen hours of sea
and no mooring
above or below
nothing
but vast geographies
shifting

*lines grooved
into a palm, rivers
carving earth
digging scars for meaning
it is not winter
but the air breaking
my tongue flayed
seventeen years of leaving
and no mooring*

The Beginning of What We Thought Was Rain

Your hands without years,
your faces between my palms,
we meet where we exist
together. There are no rules
to sort our names here
or there.

Why is the name of rain?
How is the color of water?

In the days ahead remind me
of cotton against my skin.

I pray to angels—
Los Angeles, hear me:
bring my sons to me.

Sometimes it's as if I wake to a forest
listening for the language of trees.

June and the way water finds our ears—

in rhyme,

rain rain go
come again another
little () wants to

in arithmetic,

to the beat over our heads and pillows
the tin roof adds and subtracts
the drops of rain

in science,

all rain not claimed by the earth
returns to the ocean where you say
where does the sea go when it spills in my ear
each time you dive off my shoulders.

But the days of thin soup
from Julys to Decembers. We hide in our socks
American cities, American dreams in our pockets.

Rules say.
Say only your wife and daughter.

In Okinawa there is a war. I sleep on tombs,

count my feet
(the breath of the dying
polish my bullets), by a half-moon
trace lines to map my hands and days
I don't yet know,

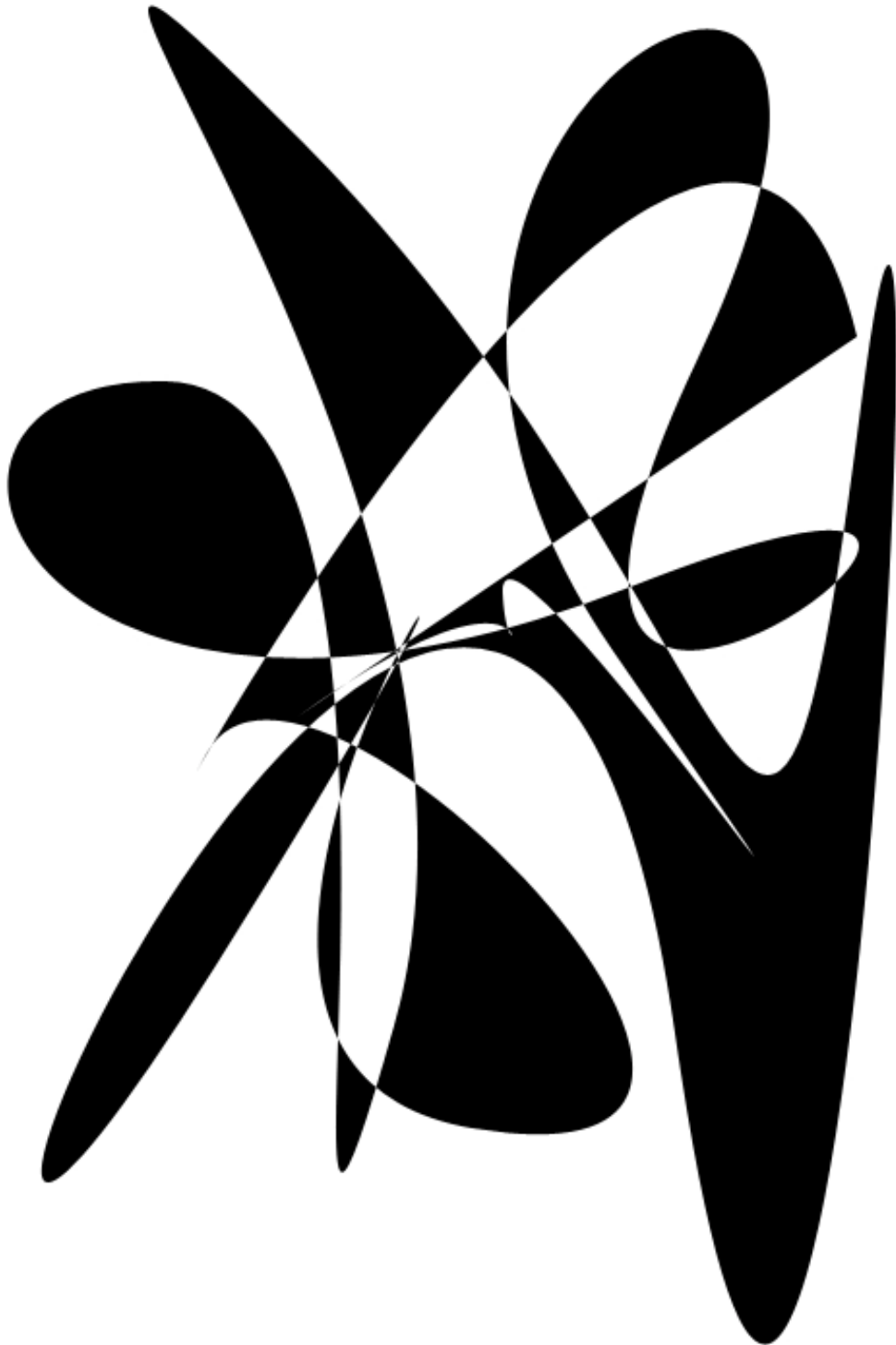
but for a day I know will come—

a wife and children:
when my lullabies now
should fall on their lashes.

In my father's rice paddies a carabao
tethered to the mango tree
summons me with a secret.
I was born to a bull.
She says my fate
is bound to the earth.
In her horns I see planes, ships,
boots, an apple, an unnamed tree
shorn of leaves by the wind,
and men dancing
as she gores me below my ribs.
My father, deep to his knees
in field water, finds me.

III. Dust

dance



Begin Here

The ventricles of this city, the veins that lead to and out of the ocean. There is sand in my left shoe. The right foot is soaking in brine. It is exhausted of trying to run. My heart returned to my place of birth not once but three times. There is nothing there left for my hands. If only water. If only sand. Give what I cannot hold. In the name of my father and of my mother and of my brothers. The street in front of this house, deluged with the absence of stones, I roll my tongue for an Ilocano word I can't remember, for the cysts in my breasts that sink or sink deeper. For my hips which never opened up to these oaks or a child, and their roots.

Five Shelters

1. Pants with their urine stains hang, decaying.
2. Horned lizard foraging for beetles, slivers of mirror and sun, a wall of rusted tin, story books piled in a chest, a stone.
3. Blue wrinkles inside a pocket full of names, sky.
4. Black sink, yellow toilet, heaps of used fabric, a tenth of a vase, all woven.
5. Ants march between sand and burnt wood carrying remnants of ash spilling prayers. Shoes left.

A Homeless Fairytale

after Purifoy's "Shelter," Outdoor Desert Art Museum, Joshua Tree

*But there was junk—piles of junk
All bundled up and neatly packaged;
Scattered out down the railroad track
Glowing brightly in the absence of sunlight
And thus not glowing brightly.*

– Noah Purifoy
(American sculptor, assemblage artist)

The first little pig met a man with a bundle of straw then built a straw house.
And the wolf huffed and puffed and blew the house down.

Wood discarded, then found.

The second little pig met a man with a bundle of sticks then built a stick house.
And the wolf huffed and puffed
and huffed and puffed and blew the house down.

Shifted into crude walls, a door, some windows, a roof.

The third little pig met a man with a load of bricks then built a brick house.
And the wolf huffed and puffed
and huffed and puffed
and huffed

Onto the desert floor.

Yes, it too. Walls peeled away, rooms, corners, floor.
Then a vanishing neighborhood, a vanishing point.
This house, a field: half-eaten
bowls of cereals and milk, flickering screen, shoes,
pictures, cookbook, red bike
with training wheels, a soft baby doll.

Out of the piles near the railroad track into the Joshua Tree desert.

looking for simple assurances

grain beetles burrow in brown rice ubiquitous like milled black pepper
as they float down the drain with the wash inspiration comes by so sparingly
a yellowing print of a Palestinian boy lying in cold concrete what pulls you
to his face, the silence of his body? what keeps your breath hovering over his
desiring to erase your distance? inside you there is wailing the glass of this
single south-facing window multiplies the light which is as meaningless
as your thumb crushing an aberrant bug climbing the stainless steel

winters pouring from my fingertips

onto windows, onto breath
saying though you will not see
river, cedar, night
in the rhythm of rain falling

*amid a childhood pouring in unbidden
sounds of fissures reach my ears
love, passage, void
into rain*

tracing nothing

among discards
not lilac, rose, wren
inside or out
only the sound of breath

*among broken
vows, ghosts, bindings
shoes and rain
tenderness leaving*

between bread and longing

I am haunted by slivers
dying Joshua trees in prayer
forests, falling, names
nine months of desert

*gaps between rocks and God
shin dagger poking my breasts
onyx, bliss, yolk
thirsting for water, a child*

Do Not Leave Any of Your Belongings Unattended

for Noah Purifoy

I may be tempted to take a sample and it would have everything
to do with integrity, cross the boundary between refuse
and beauty. Or the air will take it
for sedimentation, cellular elements becoming
more than what they are, or finally, what they were

meant to be: shirts in red, blue, yellow, green say, tattered
bunched up inside

a picture frame are Jasper Johns' *Map*;

two throw away bicycles mounted on a board atop a sloping

roof are a Dali sculpture; a urinal left over from a riot installed on a free
standing wall, Duchamp's *Fountain*;

when next to a real water fountain, it spells
the dichotomy of a country: *White Colored*.

Once, a chair is broken by accident,
the back given way so that the arms that hold it
bend
and the legs splayed, like a dancer's.

In the end he says everything

breaks down into art.

Then Leaving

i.

Autumn

It is beautiful to leave a room when the sun is barely hitting the windows and the narrow strips of light reveal dust floating, particles like seconds wending their way from shade to luminescence to shade and back again until they are altogether lost in darkness.

Your mother's voice

is streaming from far away although her head is over your shoulder. You hear it like a report, like news over the static of a radio—*today at dawn the levees broke and the Mississippi River flooded New Orleans. An unknown number of people have died.* You know something awful has happened but, like a subscriber getting facts second-hand, it is distant, and you are removed. She leaves the room.

Your father is dead.

Rooms, not every detail of it, but their essence. These are what we remember.

iii.

Outside the window,

the vines are heavy with tomatoes. Beans hanging over sticks and wires, bright green leaves climbing over a wall. A spider is weaving a web between the glass and the frame. A beam of sun is throwing an isosceles triangle on the dark oak table, from the wind chime you bought your mother suspended on a rafter. You remember your father on a ladder pounding the nail into the wood.

His hand,

the one that soaped you in the tub when you were little, towel-dried your hair, brushed out the knots, rubbed Vick's on your chest and nose, folded the blanket tightly around you like you were a sausage, iced your blacks and blues from falling off the bike or running, held your hand when you insisted on walking outside in the dark to see the stars—

You wake

to yelling and you try to muffle it but it doesn't stop. And then you are pulled to it, as if a song that you hate but get used to and start humming, slowly trying to decipher the words through the cushions, then through the door, through the crack, and past the rectangle of yellow light on the ground, following the rhythm with your small bare feet until you come up to it: the voice unfurling the words against the walls and the one not speaking—*stupid motherfuck*...And you see your father, his hand lifted over your mother's face.

Everything beginning

to darken with dusk sinking, and you rest your head to her and feel her soft breathing on the skin of your ear. When you wake up she is cradling you in her arms and at four-and-a-half you think you are too big, your feet dangling low over her knees, but you don't mind. You watch her, the soft jaw, smooth brown skin, pale lips, and the curling lashes, flickering as she sleeps. You touch her hand resting over your belly, run your fingers along the length of hers.

You dream sometimes of your mother's hands folded over you that night on the way to her parent's house, her skin pliant and hard, as if the world were opening up and closing down.

In graceful strokes,

he is combing your mother's hair, tying it with a gold elastic, laying it over one shoulder. He presses his thumbs against her skin along the spine, the small of her back, her hips, repeating. You are on their bed pretending to sleep. The rain is keeping a constant beat on the roof, a cool humid breeze blows in through the window. He is humming Nat King Cole and you see your mother's eyes in the mirror close.

viii.

The rooms we remember are the rooms we leave.

Your palm hard against her cheek.

Days winding down into minutes winding into seconds winding into dust.

Listening to rain.

To the wind folding. Your skin catching the swell of lightning before it comes. You are lying on the floor of a room in the dark. The walls snatch the light in corners, illuminate the joints, bindings. Coming out of the haze, where there is no one, a soft, soft face. Your mother's.

x.

This light through the window.

Strips shredding the dark. Then leaving.