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Moon Dog [Translation]

Judy Halebsky (Translating Author)
Dominican University of California, judy.halebsky@dominican.edu

Tomoyuki Endo (Translating Author)

Mizuho Ishida

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MIZUHO ISHIDA travels widely and writes poetry in conversation with international culture and current events. After the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, he conducted several interviews with people in the affected area, including his hometown, Saitama, where he is the head priest of the Enzo-in Buddhist temple.

月の犬

乾いた凍土に舌をたらずと 犬たちはハアハア
歩きまわり、次々 荒野を生みだしてゆく。
空になにか白いものを見つけて、彼女は
それを月だと教わった。

他郷の響きにはアドレスがない。
昨日の白が裂けて、耳鳴りの内奥から
新しい悲鳴が咲きます。世間とは肌理の
つながりで 生きていく。それだけ。

都会のスーパーから部屋に戻る
仏壇に飾られた遺影、徹底された無言。
ボイスレコーダーの電子音と

紙のふれあう音、母が子の爪を切る鉄のリズムが
ばちん ちち
ばちん ちち
ばちん ちち ばちん ち 由に
鳥たちのさえずりや羽音みたく漂っていた。

無音の霧のなかで耳を澄ますとどうしても
だれもない村に帰ってきてしまう。
黒とブルーの防護服に身を包み、

Translated by
JUDY HALEBSKY AND TOMOYUKI ENDO



Moon Dog

Putting their tongues down to the frozen ground
dogs walk about panting *hah, hah*, creating a
no-man's-land.

Finding something white up in the sky,
she learns that it's the moon.

There is no address with the sound of no-man's-land.

Yesterday's moon torn out of the sky.

In my head, a ceaseless humming.

In the world outside of this skin
a new moon. That's all.

Coming back from a supermarket downtown
the portraits of the ancestors, the absolute silence.

白いマスクとヘルメットで顔をおおった作業員たち。

屋敷門のある築三百年のタカノ家は除染車により

しゅー、しゅー、茅葺屋根から丸ごと

薬液を吹きかけられている。

二年と三月の不在の力学、あわあわした黄色の

穂先たちが ビニールハウスの

天井をつきやぶり、パイプ鉄骨を持ちあげていた。

牛たちの消えた牛舎には、

黒いビニール袋の山が積み上げられている。

六月の田畑は一面、シロツメグサの静かな白い瞳で、

きつちゃんが後を継いだ駄菓子屋は

「資材館」とひとことそっけなく

看板があり、児童公園は銀色のタンクの林になった。

雀をガス欠にしてやるんだと息巻いた

BB弾のレンジャー、ピアノが上手で礼儀正しい

ミンコはぐいへいった。家の前を通ると、

野球中継と喧嘩と猫の声か

とびかっていたサエキ兄弟は？

遊び仲間のいる十字路で、するどく口笛を吹いても

夕方の陽気な世界に飛びだす子は

Floating in the air, the recorder's electric hum
 the rustling of papers, the rhythm of the mother
 clipping her son's nails

ptinc, tic, tic,

ptinc, titic, ptinc, tic...

up in the sky, a distant flapping of birds.

Within the fog of silence, hearing nothing

I come back to no-man's village.

Laborers in black and blue radiation suits protecting their bodies,
 covering their faces with white masks, their heads with helmets.

Taka's farmhouse with its two-hundred-year-old gate
 the whole thing washed by some chemical spray

shh, shh...

Power grids of nonexistence,

two years and three months in this no-man's-land.

The tips of fallow, foamy plants have broken through
 the tops of the greenhouses.

They have lifted the iron frames that held the glass in place.

Now, in the barns with no cows

there are piled mountains of black plastic bags.

The paddies and fields in June are covered

with eyes of white clover.

Kit'chan took over the penny candy store

has a sign that simply says, **WAREHOUSE**

and the children's park turned to a grove of huge silver tanks.

A boy playing park ranger with his BB gun

declaring, *those sparrows, I'm gonna smoke 'em!*

Where is Mitsuko, our polite and tender piano player?

What happened to the Saeki brothers?

Passing their house, I would always hear

ひとりもない。

幻種の蝶のように 家々の戸板にひらひら舞う

避難先住所とケータイ番号は

奪われたどの未来や過去にもつながっていない。

酔ったコガの爺さまがテレビカメラに言いはなつ

あんたらはねえ 瓦礫、瓦礫いうけど

わたしたちの先祖代々が暮らした家なんだ。

おれにはいえん、そんなふう

いっちゃあ、いかんよ。

よだごで、ばらばらになつても

木っ端になつたつて、ふる里ですから。

それでも彼女は泣いたのではなかつた

泣くこともできないくらい深く哀しんで

体から透明なしずくを一粒あふれさせたただつた。

ふるえる、液体という音響伝達器

涙は語るのだ。

そのあまりに密やかな音は

どんな言葉にも届いてはいないけれど。

quarrels and meowing and the baseball game on TV.
At the corner, where there should be lots of people out

there's a sharp whistling
nobody comes into the glimmering dusk.

All there is
is a new species of butterfly
the evacuation addresses and cell phone numbers
fluttering on the doors of houses
not connected to the future or the past.

The grandpa at Koga's, drunk, shouts at the TV camera,
*You call this debris? These are the parts of the house
where our ancestors lived.*

*I can't call this garbage
and you can't either.*

*What the tsunami has turned into rubble,
this is my home.*

And then, there's the young mother who doesn't cry.

She sighs deeply, in equal measure.
From her body, one transparent drop,
quavering, sound-transmitting.

This tear speaks
but the sound is too weak to reach any word.

She hurriedly tries to hold the whispers of her memories
lost and almost lost

ptinc, tic, tic, ptinc, titic, ptinc, tic
just like she holds her son, sleepless in the rain,
by the restful song of the clipper.

From the little finger on his left hand
one by one, slowly, and carefully
not to make a mistake

若い母親は みなし児になつてしまひそうな

。 ささげをこぼす ささげをこぼす

ばちん ばちん ちちち ばちち

雨がこわくて眠れない子を安らぎにみちた

鉄の歌で 抱きしめるみたいに。

左手の小指から順番に ゆっくり 慎重に

まちがえずに 爪切りを動かしていく

もうすぐ こんなふう に ていねいに

切らせてはもらえなくなるから。

おさない爪はまだやわらかく 澄んでいて

鋭く輝く刃をあてるとかんたんに

はなれ こぼれ いくつもの透明な月が、

海も潮騒もない連絡ノートの

まじさらな水平線にはらはら落ちてゆく。

夜の底に

このひとときを封印する

鍵盤のように響いて。



working the clipper.
Soon, she won't have the chance to
clip his nails.

The nails are still soft and transparent.
They are easily clipped and fall
and so many transparent moons fall
one after another
on the clear horizon of a handwritten note
without sea or the sound of the waves
sounding as a piano key
sealing this moment into the deep bottom of the sea.