Moon Dog [Translation]

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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.

乾いた洗濯に舌をたさせ、犬たちはハァハァ
歩きまわり、次々、荒野を歩きながら
空になにか白いものを見つけて、彼女は
それを月だと教えた。
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
新しい悲鳴が咲きだす。世間とは肌理の
つながりで、生きていく。それだけ。

都會のスーパーから部屋に帰る
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、母が子の爪を切る時のリズムが
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.
明るい月の下で、彼女の手袋を気にかけて、彼女の目をよぎる。
頭を抱えて、彼女の顔を眺めながら、彼女が思い出すことを知る。

彼女の手が手袋を取って、膝に置いた。彼女がそれを見つめると、首を傾げる。

「ああ、思い出した。あの時、君が手袋を手に入れていた。」

彼女が手袋を手に入れて、再び彼女に向けた。彼女は手袋を手にして、小さく微笑んだ。

「ありがとう、君のことを思い出させてくれた。」
Floating in the air, the recorder's electric hum
the rustling of papers, the rhythm of the mother
clipping her son's nails
  \textit{ptinc, tic, tic,}
  \textit{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
  \textit{shh, shh...}

Power grids of nonexistence,
two years and three months in this no-man's-land.
The tips of sallow, 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, \textit{WAREHOUSE}
and the children's park turned to a grove of huge silver tanks.

A boy playing park ranger with his BB gun
declaring, \textit{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
ひとりもいない。

幻の蝶のように、家々の戸板にひらり舞う

奪われたこの未来や過去にもつながっていな

あたたかさが間さまでテレビカメラに言葉はなつ

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。そんなふうに

いっぱい、いかに。

そこで、ばらばらになっても

木々端になったって、ふる里ですかから

それでも彼女は泣いたのではなくた

泣くこともできないくらい深く巻きで

体から透明なしずくを一粒あふれさせただけだった。

そのあまりに淡やかな音は

どんな音楽にも属いてはいないけれども。
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、みなし児になってしまうような
ぱちんぱちんちちぱちん
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単重に
まるかずに爪切りを動かしていく
もうすぐこんなふうに
切らせてはもれなくなるから。

おさない爪はまだやわらかく
澄んでいて
鍔く輝く刃で切るとかんたんに
はなれ
こぼれ
いくものが透明な月が
海も湖沼もない連絡ノートの

まっさらな水平線にばらばら落ちてゆく。

このひとときを封印する
鍵音のように響いて。
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.