

Ginger Ko 

# Tower House

When the sea is still black  
beneath our moon illumined dreaming  
I wonder at the woken gulls  
that pester our night trawler.  
I thought our communion private  
so secret it never moved water.  
But here we go through the sea weave  
and I see that we could never be  
the not nothing of nothing.  
Stars shine brighter at the edge of our eyes.

How large can stillness be? How small?  
What is the possible size of it  
amidst the surge of blood flow and mantle?  
My father thinks his silence allows us to believe  
that his beliefs are private.  
Our home, his job, us, his ostensible hatred  
when he is not withdrawn – we are supposed to  
make love out of his secret, hidden self.  
The collision of the sea birds  
is like the crumpling of tissue  
almost nothing at all.  
Their blood is the hostage  
and their love is the ransom.

I train myself around his silences  
because if he liked it, he would say so – wouldn't he?  
There is so much to say about the sea.  
What if I never stopped writing  
long after you stopped reading?  
What if years from now  
you reopened the archive and found  
it had grown on  
matured into its own castle on the water?

What if I never needed your reading at all?  
 It could be that it was just the work of waiting  
 that drove me to continue  
 your remembering to revisit me at all  
 being proof enough of recognition.

## Landfall

How do I describe how you appear  
 to the onlooker who loves you  
 who loves the seeking of you?  
 The way we weave the material  
 prevents its reunion with the earth.  
 I've sent these words to you  
 I'm begging you to think of me.  
 Let my words recall my body to you  
 mint leaves with their implausibly  
 unblemished down.

I think that with our words  
 we could convince ourselves of anything.  
 These destructive transactions of falling  
 in love imperfectly  
 the kind that destroys another's life  
 in a project of making them care about mine.  
 Any words you send me are a gift  
 of illumination.  
 The wind announces treesongs  
 and any words you send me  
 are murky sea gems.  
 I have fallen in love.  
 I have formed an ambition for myself.

As if old-growth forests  
 a tableau stylized by arrogance  
 were waiting to be hewn by just my hands.  
 It was violent folly that gave me the idea  
 that only my eyes could deflower the earth.  
 With love comes these questions:  
 It stops raining and the world grows brighter.

We make windows and square  
the sunlight/moonlight.  
What are the ethics of revealing  
your death-wish to another?  
What are the ethics of fucking someone  
while conjuring the specter  
of a third between us?

Glossy grass glitters  
from the mutter of passing cars.  
These words steer my simulation into you.  
I want to infect you with a preference  
for consuming me over all others.  
Floating somewhere in a sea gyre is a letter  
pleasing and precious  
as a gold coin folded in heavy paper.