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ANOTHER MATERIALITY



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Another materiality
A new registration protocol in dizzying mirages.
Presence as mere data.
A handprint turned mutation-spiral.

What goes on, conceivably, is the phenomenon.
What could go on is but a concept glimpsed as hope.
The materiality of wandering.

The critical moment speckled through the cross-cut.
Breathed into amphoras of uncharted lands.
A shelter found in flowing.





NOCTURNE

Some nights usher in the whisper of flawed things: a sprig not yet dry, a secret only meant for you.

The half-moon and her correspondence.

Tides.

The spin that pulls them.

In them a voice muted by the ethical imperative of the self echoes beyond the voice of that which can't be said, lost for words. A guarded voice makes sound.

The awkward dream, the vertigo

plated in melancholy.

The reverberating structure that precedes the word.

Unsolvable enigmas like the space called for here, the stealth of a close breath, frost inching forward. They spill past their forms and leave safety behind.

Make of such nights a talisman. Pebbles resting on the table.





BIRTH IS A KNOT

Uneasy, at a pause, waiting for a sound from the one with that big little foot. The first thing I saw. Before seeing. Asking myself how that foot could possibly belong to a person who came from inside of me. What I remember from that night happened at a different speed. That speed has gone on for twenty-four years. And counting.

We rushed to the emergency room on the night of January 22nd, because, as I later found out, my placenta was becoming detached and I needed a C-section. The one with the big foot didn't cry at birth, and though they said he was fine, they had to push him to cry so I would calm down. We later found out he'd been tangled up in the umbilical cord, wrapped around him thrice, which had caused the tear in the placenta. Birth is a knot. From that day, the sixth floor where we lived became a house of air. And the light at that height, with that quiet and ubiquitous child, quickened.

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I think about all this while Pablo sleeps after his first nightshift on-call at the OB-GYN hospital. It wasn't his turn to go there, but given all the shuffling and hospital reconversions with the pandemic, he'll spend two months there. One nightshift on call every four days. Between filling out paperwork and going to and from the lab, he said he'd seen an abysmal number of babies being born. I suppose that, yes, six or seven babies can multiply the abyss.

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My grandmother gave birth to three babies. Only one, my father, survived. Strangely endowed with being both the first and the third, he learned ubiquity. The other boy and girl died at birth. Tangled up in their umbilical cords. To give birth, to give light, can be chock with shadow.

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Anne Carson once said that a lifetime drawing profiles from one perspective would make it seem like we only have one eye, the landscape fleeing our grasp, like we can't fully possess anything. So we shouldn't hide the fact that our canvas is flat. Mistakes are among what she thinks about the most, and she appreciates them because they let her see herself think, keeping mistakes. A mistake, a mishap in a transmission, can draw two characters with a single stroke of the brush. What goes on, and its knots, are like that sometimes. **MM**

