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Last I Heard You Say

Finlay Wright

Droplets by Daniel Cheung



“Diane! It’s about ten-thirty A.M., February 23rd. I’ve just woken up. Right now, I can see from my window...trees. Lotta trees. Don’t think there’s any more than yesterday.”

A jingling laugh, the kind she always had when something was endlessly amusing to her, though no one else would probably find it funny. And that just made it funnier to her.

“Wouldn’t that be something, though? Imagine waking up and looking outside, and there’s just... like those things from, uh...oh, God, what are they called? From Lord of the Rings. You know what I’m talking about, the, uh...Ents! Those things! One of those just sitting outside your window. Can you imagine? That’d be a hell of a ‘good morning’. Probably send you into cardiac arrest.”

A long sigh.

“Sorry, Diane, I don’t know what I’m talking about. I just woke up, man. I’m delirious. You know, I had the wildest dream last night...”

Click. Diane’s knuckles went white around the old tape recorder before she forced herself to put it back in the box. She never liked that part, anyway.

*

“Diiii-aaaaaane. Dee-yahn. Lady Di. Oh, that one wasn’t so good.”

Diane couldn’t help her smile at the crackly pfft noise that followed. That was her favourite bit of the whole thing. The one sound she never got tired of.

Inscribe everything onto your chest and don't forget ya past
Wave goodbye and high-five the sour memories you pass

All our lives connect, as we pass our light from one person to the next
The flame of that torch will be relayed forevermore, so
When the going gets rough and there's roadblocks in my way
Don't be afraid 'cause you can step up once again

Lalalala Don't stop baby
Lalalala Don't cry baby
Lalala Don't worry baby!
You can smile again, yeah

life rolls on

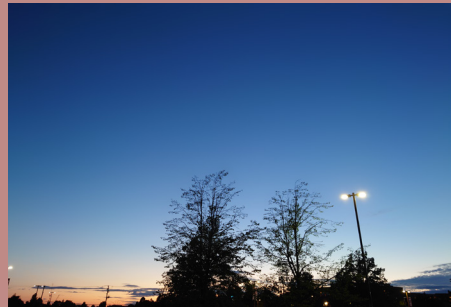
Song by BACK-ON

いつまでうつむいているんだ？
いつまで弱音を吐いてんだ？
悲しみから抜け出せずに
キミが思うより 世界はもう
明日を生きてる
キミを残して…

Yo if you wanna be strong like me for ya life!
チカラに変わると受けとめるしかない。
悲しみなんてGinとdrink it up tonight
涙一滴 グラスにDrop! tastes like a lime
枯れるまで泣いたら晴れしかない
単純明快だが俺なりのStyle!
雨のち晴れたらYou gotta go ya way!
さあ行こうTake my hand let's go!

消えてゆく光、生まれてゆく光
忘れないさ この心の中に
進んで行く果てしない My way!
力強く踏み出せ! Once again!

Lalalala Don't stop baby
Lalalala Don't cry baby
Lalala Don't worry baby!



Summer Nights by Daniel Cheung

You can Smile again yeah

過去は誰にも消せないページ
だから人は今日もページをめくり
喜び悲しみ書き足して
キミだけのStory作っていくんだ。

Yo 誰も知らない未来はWhite paper
誰もが皆、不安定なStoryteller
足跡残して明日を見てんだ！
Don't let it get you down man 俺らとstand
up!
その顔見せなKeep ya head up!
心に灯せ！ light up your fire!
刻み込めその胸にdon't forget ya past
悲しみも連れて未来へ手を伸ばす

繋ぎゆく命、その光をチカラに
渡していくんだ 次の未来へと
進んで行く果てしない My way!
この大地踏みしめ Once again

Lalalala Don't stop baby
Lalalala Don't cry baby
Lalala Don't worry baby!
You can Smile again yeah



Into the Waves by Daniel Cheung

Kvitka on the Tongue

Evelina Groll

And as her memory begins to falter
She remembers long forgotten words
In the language of her parents
A kvitka - flower
Springs from her tongue
And she is startled by the beauty
of her complex mind
That reveals itself to her
As it unravels.

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Memoirs of Spring
by Zeyna Al Gutani



On My Way Out

Adriana Zdravec



Charge by Daniel Cheung

my grandmother tells me
i can smell the seawater
the ferry is just over there

we are in the basement
where she lives
there is no water here

my grandmother tells me
come eat!
there's bouillabaisse on the stove

she scoops nothing
into my bowl that i ran to get
and i stare at the invisible crabs

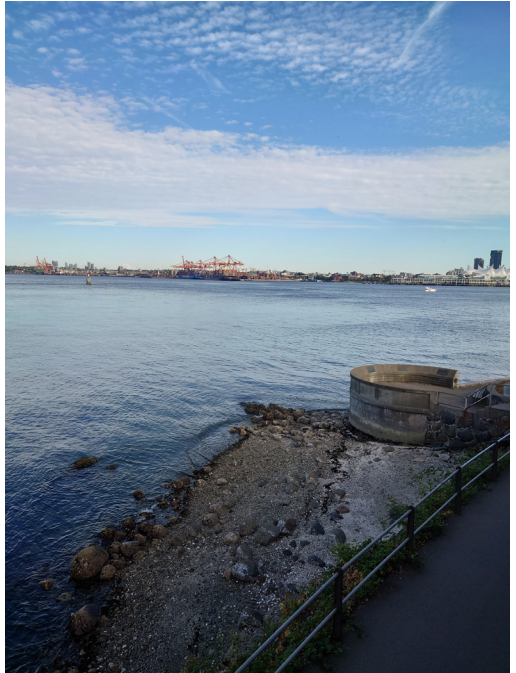
my grandmother tells me
that i should come dance
with her and her husband

i never met my grandfather
but we dance anyways
to her own quiet music

i gave my grandmother the phone
to talk to an old friend
a real one this time

she hands it back
with some lucky red candies
and i ask her where she got them

my grandmother tells me
i can do magic too, you know
i'm a trick or treater the night
before halloween



The Edge by Daniel Cheung

The Lighthouse
by Daniel Cheung

my grandmother tells me
about her baby girl
who never cries

she's always happy
i see her face in scattered photos
and on the teddy bear she holds

she hasn't left us yet
she still hums wholeheartedly
below my bedroom
talking to her old friends
and my grandfather

at the same time
it's been years since i've seen her



You and I
Kiara Bhangu

We've walked down these streets,
hand in hand
You led the way, now I help you
down the steps
Our conversations change,
but the love's still strong,
I've never had any doubt about that.
I've grown taller,
your hair has turned grey
I chatter,
you take in everything I say
You fade; I stand bright as ever,
and that's a heavy price to pay.

There is a part of me still trapped in a fifteen year old ghost-girl version of myself. In my writing, I am compelled to return to the site of my first haunting over and over again.

An origin story.

In French your *origine* means your ethnicity. More so, it is a way of drawing a line between who is French and who isn't.

I have a laminated booklet with a picture of my face on its front cover and a schedule I have glued onto the back. I pull out my booklet every morning as I run towards the iron door of my school. Below my name reads, “3e3 NF:” *troisième* for the French equivalent of ninth

Wings to Fly by Daniel Cheung



grade, *trois* for my section, and NF to mean *non-francophone*, which denotes a person who does not speak French. In France, immigrants are defined negatively, by our lack.

The *classe troisième* is divided into a *classe non-francophone* and a *classe normale*.

The Bond villain, *Le Chiffre*, names himself for the numbers on a stateless passport issued to him at the close of the Second World War. “I am only a number on a passport,” he says.

I've seen a series of portraits of my dad's family dating from around the time of their departure. Each is rectangular and thumb-sized with a blue backdrop. My aunt is caught laughing at a private joke. It hits too close to its mark to be spoken aloud. My dad leans toward the aperture in anticipation of the flash. He dons his fake Lacoste with real glamour. My grandmother's dark hair is pulled back to show off a pair of heavy pearl earrings. There is a gravity in her face that deepens her beauty, which might also be tiredness. I imagine that these jagged portraits are cast-offs. Their uneven edges betray the places where they have been cut away to be sent to passport agencies or close friends. The agencies are now defunct; the friends have been lost or misplaced like so many invalid passports.

My dad likes to tell this joke, which is not really a joke. He says, “Your great-grandma lived in four different countries without ever having to move.” When I retell this anecdote in a tone of complete sincerity, he mocks me for missing the point.

In elementary school, my mom often took me to the public library to flip through the glossy pages of DK Eyewitness books. My favorite of

the series was the one called *SPY*. In it, I read about a device that allowed you to hear through walls. I wanted to be able to hear through walls, to hear what wasn't meant for me.

A silence hangs over the subject of the war. I have no choice but to fill this silence with my own conjecture. If I were to ask my dad for specifics, he might become suspicious. My made-up stories have the too-smooth texture of a lie.

I devise an elaborate means of escaping from my *classe non-francophone*. I learn to wait until my classmates pool at the middle school entrance so that I can slip through undetected. I flash my schedule at the impatient *gardien*, hoping the laminate might catch the light of the fluorescent bulbs long enough for him to push me through. My *non-francophone* classmates and I wait out the rest of the class period in a small park adjacent to a church where they light their cigarettes and we invent Bond-like nicknames for our *francophone* classmates. We have difficulty remembering their hyphenated names, their double names.

Casino Royale, Bond's origin story, ends with his colleague, Matthis, dragging him back into the realm of moral absolutes. Matthis Eco argues, dissolves Bond's ethical dilemma by reminding that he is a machine. He tells him: "Surround yourself with human beings, my dear James ... But don't let me down and become human yourself. We would lose such a wonderful machine." From this point on, Bond hardens into cold externality: his moral center exchanged for a singular purpose.

My non-francophone class is given the choice to appear in two class photographs: our own and that of the *classe normale*. I sit on a bench

while the *classe normale* takes its photo, hiding my face in a copy of *Ghost World*. "Why didn't you take the photo with us?" my *non-francophone* classmate asks.

We have difficulty remembering our double identities, where our allegiances should lie.

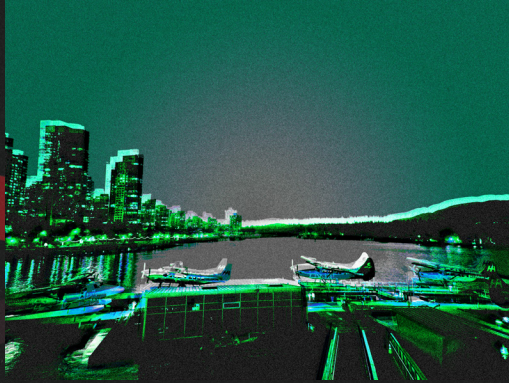
You. Me. Same, my dad says. If that were the case, I think, I wouldn't need to hear through walls. The walls of his memory don't let me hear around their corners.

I can no longer remember the reasons for my hatred, my singular purpose long abandoned.

Around the time of my visits to the public library, my parents buy me a spy kit. It contains a set of purple walkie-talkies, a pen with invisible ink and a listening device. I run to the other room, shouting excitedly at my parents to keep talking. When I bring the headset to my ears, angling the satellite-shaped disc towards the door, their fragmented voices float toward me like ghosts.



We Are Here by Daniel Cheung



Beyond
by Daniel Cheung

Afterhours
by Stephen Nganga



*sometimes i think you'd make the
better Christian*

Joyce Song

would you understand
my hesitation?
it chokes me.

i tuck away morsels of my innermost meditations
into loose sheets, a memo pad, lecture notes, this poem - never in one place -
because this game of vulnerability, i'm no good at
while you,
you lift the trophy, shining, face alight,
a seasoned master -
even though
i am the one on my knees on Sunday.

sometimes,
i see the way you love,
how much you (love) love -
i see the way you long to know and be known
in the way you compose words,
with extravagance, dress yourself,
with fervour, seek intimacy.

sometimes
i imagine you on your knees on Sunday,
shining, like Moses, face alight,
and i can't open my eyes.

Belief by Daniel Cheung



Paper

Himanshi Sali

They say you can't crumple a paper the same way twice; the wrinkles won't be the same

I smooth out the wrinkles and bumps
-*No matter how many times* this paper was clumped

I let you beat it down to a pulp -ink from black to blue
Just so I could blend it all up and start anew

a *Fresh* new sheet -coloured just the way you wanted it to be
Clean and organic, untainted -*straight from the tree*

They say you can't crumple a paper, the same way twice -the ridges won't be the same.
You can try to do it slowly, but the fury will always *take hold of the reigns*
You can flatten out the sheet, and still write on it all the same.

They say you can't crumple a paper the same way twice, the wrinkle-
-This time it was my one dimple

They say you can't crumple a paper the same way twice.

But the relentless fury between your fingers, hurts the same every time
i'm left alone.... *again* to the rhythm and rhyme
no longer someone you can call "*mine*"
The paper you had left crumpled on the floor,
can only *wish* but never dare to be *more*.

Fragments by Daniel Cheung





Metropolis by Daniel Cheung



Memoirs of Spring by Zeyna Al Gutani



The Continuity of Parks

Lyka
McAllister-Borchert
Translator

He started to read a novel a few days ago. He abandoned it for urgent business and reopened it once he was returning to his farm by train: the plot slowly drew him in, and so did the depiction of the protagonists. Later that afternoon, after writing a letter to his attorney and discussing his business with his butler discussing the matter of sharecropping, he returned to the book in the tranquillity of his office which overlooks a park with oak trees. While lounging in his favourite comfortable armchair, sitting away from the door, lessening the chance of intrusions, he caresses the green velvet of his chair while reading the last few chapters. He remembered the names and images of the protagonists effortlessly; the novelistic illusion won him over immediately. He enjoyed the almost indulgent pleasure of disengaging himself line by line from his surroundings. He felt comfortable resting his head on the velvet

of the high-backed chair, cigarettes within reach, that beyond the windows the air danced in the sunset beneath the oaks.

Word by word, absorbed by the sordid dilemma of the characters, letting himself drift towards the images that were arranged and acquired colour and movement, he witnessed their last meeting in the cabin on the mountain. First, the women came, suspicious; now the lover came inside, his face injured by the blow of a tree branch. Admirably, she stopped the blood using her kisses but rejected her attempt at embrace, he had not come to repeat the ceremonies of their secret passion, protected by the forest of dry leaves and secretive paths. The dagger warmed itself against his chest, and underneath liberty pounded, hidden nearby. A lustful, longing dialogue ran through the pages like a stream of snakes, feeling like everything had been decided from etern-

ty. Including those caresses that entangled the lover's body, as if wanting to contain him there and dissuade him from it; drew the figure of another, necessary to destroy. Nothing had been forgotten: alibis, chance, and possible mistakes. From that hour on, every moment had its own meticulously attributed use. The ruthless double-checking was interrupted as a hand caressed a cheek. Night had begun to fall.

Without looking at each other, both attached rigidly to the task awaiting them as they separated from each other at the door of the cabin. She had to continue down the path, going north. From the opposite path, he turned to see her running with her hair down. He ran in turn, taking cover in the trees and hedges until he distinguished the mauve-coloured mist of the dimly lit path leading to the house. The dogs are trained not to bark, and they did not. The butler should not be there at this hour, and he wasn't. He climbed the three steps of the porch and entered. From the blood galloping in his ears, came the voice of his lover: first a blue room, then the gallery, then a carpeted stair. At the top, two doors. No one in the first room, no one in the second as well. The door to the reading room, dagger in hand, the light of the windows, the high back of the green velvet armchair, the head of the man in the chair, who came to the end of the novel.

La Continuidad de los Parques

Julio Cortázar
Author



New Growth by Daniel Cheng

Había empezado a leer la novela unos días antes. La abandonó por negocios urgentes, volvió a abrirla cuando regresaba en tren a la finca; se dejaba interesar lentamente por la trama, por el dibujo de los personajes. Esa tarde, después de escribir una carta a su apoderado y discutir con el mayordomo una cuestión de aparcerías, volvió al libro en la tranquilidad del estudio que miraba hacia el parque de los robles. Arrellanado en su sillón favorito, de espaldas a la puerta que lo hubiera molestado como una irritante posibilidad de intrusiones, dejó que su mano izquierda acariciara una y otra vez el terciopelo verde y se puso a leer los últimos capítulos. Su memoria retenía sin esfuerzo los nombres y las imágenes de los protagonistas; la ilusión novelesca lo ganó casi en seguida. Gozaba del placer casi perverso de irse desgajando línea a línea de lo que lo rodeaba, y sentir a la vez que su cabeza descansaba cómodamente en el terciopelo del alto respaldo,

que los cigarrillos seguían al alcance de la mano, que más allá de los ventanales danzaba el aire del atardecer bajo los robles. Palabra a palabra, absorbido por la sórdida disyuntiva de los héroes, dejándose ir hacia las imágenes que se concertaban y adquirían color y movimiento, fue testigo del último encuentro en la cabaña del monte. Primero entraba la mujer, recelosa; ahora llegaba el amante, lastimada la cara por el chicotazo de una rama. Admirablemente restañaba ella la sangre con sus besos, pero él rechazaba las caricias, no había venido para repetir las ceremonias de una pasión secreta, protegida por un mundo de hojas secas y senderos furtivos. El puñal se entibiaba contra su pecho, y debajo latía la libertad agazapada. Un diálogo anhelante corría por las páginas como un arroyo de serpientes, y se sentía que todo estaba decidido desde siempre. Hasta esas caricias que enredaban el cuerpo del amante como queriendo retenerlo y



Perdido en el tiempo y la tierra

Zainab Salam

Paso mi tiempo en una nube
Esta no es la forma correcta de existir
Si tuviera fama ya hubiera sido la muerte
Si tuviera vida ya la habría perdido
¿Cómo es la vida de un artista?
Busco la respuesta correcta, pero todos los lugares están tranquilos
Respondería mis preguntas,
pero la tinta de mi bolígrafo desaparece en el papel
cada vez que intento escribir
A la luz de la luna es donde encuentro consuelo
Sólo soy un extraño en una tierra de los familiares
La tristeza es una constante
Cada día parece el pasado y el futuro
¿Me pregunto cuánto tiempo pasará esto?