

hands over my eyes. Our velocity was increasing by the second, as is required in these cases of bodies falling through space. Suddenly, I looked through the slight spaces between his fingers and saw a sharp rock graze the top of his head. Suddenly I had to turn my own head to confirm that my legs had been separated from my torso by a rock, possibly of calcereous origin, whose serrated edge severed anything that came against it with the perfection of a saw used in the construction of ocean liners. With some effort, it is only fair to admit, we were saving my companion, his beautiful beard, and me, my eyes. It is true that now and then -- every fifty feet or so, as I calculate it -- a part of our bodies would be separated from us. For example, during five such intervals, we lost my companion, his left ear, his right elbow, a leg (I don't remember which), his testicles, and his nose; I, the upper part of the thorax, my spinal cord, my left eyebrow, my left ear, and my jugular vein. But this is nothing compared to what followed. A thousand feet above the plain, all we had left respectively was the following: my companion, his two hands (only to the carpal bones) and his beautiful gray beard; I, my two hands (also only to the carpal bones) and my eyes. A slight fear began to possess us. What if our hands were torn away by another boulder? We kept falling. Approximately ten feet above the plain, a pole left out by a worker capriciously caught the hands of my companion. Seeing my own orphaned eyes left totally unprotected, I must confess with eternal, unforgettable shame, I withdrew my hands from his beautiful gray beard to protect my eyes from any impact. I was unable to cover them, for my hands were immediately caught in the same fashion by another pole pointing in a different direction from the aforementioned pole, at which point we were separated from each other for the first time during the entire descent. But I couldn't complain; my eyes landed safe and sound on the grassy plain and could see a little ways off, the beautiful gray beard of my companion, shining in all its glory.

THERESA HAK KYUNG CHA

Dictée (1982)

Open paragraph It was the first day period She had come from afar period tonight at dinner comma the families would ask comma open quotation marks How was the first day interrogation mark close quotation marks at least to say the least of it possible comma the answer would be comma open quotation marks there is but one thing period There is someone from afar period close quotation marks

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She mimics the speaking. That might resemble speech. (Anything at all.) Bared noise, groan, bits torn from words. She hesitates to measure the accuracy, she resorts to mimicking gestures with the mouth. The entire lower lip would lift upwards then sink back to its original place. She would then gather both lips and protrude them in a pout taking in the breath that might utter some thing. (One thing. Just one.) But the breath falls away. With a slight tilting of her head backwards, she would gather the strength in her shoulders and remain in this position.

It murmurs inside. It murmurs. Inside is the pain of speech the pain to say. Larger still. Greater than is the pain not to say. To not say. Says nothing against the pain to speak. It festers inside. The wound, liquid, dust. Must break, must void.

Free the back of her neck she releases her shoulders free. She swallows once more. (Once more. One more time would do.) In preparation. It augments. To such a pitch. Endless drone, refueling

itself. Autonomous. Self-generating. Swallows with last efforts last wills against the pain that wishes it to speak.

She allows others. In place of her. Admits others to make full. Make swarm. All barren cavities to make swollen. The others each occupying her. Tumorous layers, expel all excesses until in all cavities she is flesh.

She allows herself caught in their threading, anonymous in their thick motion in the weight of their utterance. When the amplification stops there might be an echo. She might make the attempt then. The echo part. At the pause. When the pause has already soon begun and has rested there still. She waits inside the pause. Inside her. Now. This very moment. Now. She takes rapidly the air, in gulfs, in preparation for the distances to come. The pause ends. The voice wraps another layer. Thicker now even. From the waiting. The wait from pain to say. To not to. Say.

She would take on their punctuation. She waits to service this. Theirs. Punctuation. She would become, herself, demarcations. Absorb it. Spill it. Seize upon the punctuation. Last air. Give her. Her. The relay. Voice. Assign. Hand it. Deliver it. Deliver.

She relays the others. Recitation. Evocation. Offering. Provocation. The begging. Before her. Before them.

Now the weight begins from the uppermost back of her head, pressing downward. It stretches evenly, the entire skull expanding tightly all sides towards the front of her head. She gasps from its pressure, its contracting motion.

Inside her voids. It does not contain further. Rising from the empty below, pebble lumps of gas. Moisture. Begin to flood her. Dissolving her. Slow, slowed to deliberation. Slow and thick.

The above traces from her head moving downward closing her eyes, in the same motion, slower parting her mouth open together with her jaw and throat which the above falls falling just to the end not stopping there but turning her inside out in the same motion, shifting complete the whole weight to elevate upward.

Begins imperceptibly, near-perceptible. (Just once. Just one time and it will take.) She takes. She takes the pause. Slowly. From the thick. The thickness. From weighted motion upwards. Slowed. To deliberation even when it passed upward through her mouth again. The delivery. She takes it. Slow. The invoking. All the time now. All the time there is. Always. And all times. The pause. Uttering. Hers now. Hers bare. The utter.