

Sophia Terazawa

Memory Resurrection

This was written after heartbreak.

Tell me, once again, the price of my survival.

Yes, my name was WAR.

I've since given this body other names.

For example: Photo of Woman, snapped moments before her execution. /
This will not be shown.

The photo is irrelevant in wrenching truth out of our past.

My name was TERROR.

For example: Photo of Man holding his pistol against Nguyễn Văn Lém. /
Man holding his child.

Here, I've told you everything I knew before the information killed me.

I was FREEDOM at the price of freedom.

I was easily recorded.

I was rendered, drawn, spaced apart.

In more specific terms, DISSOCIATION, as defined:

The separation of whole segments of the personality (as in multiple personality disorder) or of discrete mental processes (as in the schizophrenias) from the mainstream of consciousness or of behavior with loss of integrated awareness and autonomous functioning of the separated segments or parts...

—Merriam-Webster

also: I was wretched.

We, the Wretched

This was written after heartbreak.

Bring this glory.

Let our drums unite the clans.

Our gods: *Raijin*. Thunder. *Fujin*. Wind. *Kaji*. Fire. *Jishin*. Earth.
 Rumble. *Kami*. Typhoon. Rain. *Ame-no-uzume-no-mikoto!*

Answer: May she dance? May she hear us?

 Stop!

A screeching in the distance swings over the mountains like night fog or something cloaked in blood gnawing right through it. May we survive her?

Six men to the *taiko*. Six men beating oceans from their drums.
Two men die. One is shot from far behind. The arrow hisses. Then it hits.
The second body loosens to a sword. Listen as it slumps against his drum.

Long ago, we fashioned armor out of skin, bone.
Chests, bound with steel. Black teeth plaited black hair.

We raced among our husbands, sons into their wars.
We tendered out their throats.
We helped them to their knees.

We killed them, yes, before the guns could take us all.

Wait tonight for lightning.

Honor what may come.

Pigs and Battleships

This was written at the breakdown of our love.

Suspended. Closer than we've ever been before.

Did you feel it, too? That camera above us, making shadows out of groans. Was the conversation over? Were we in some purgatory Navy occupation?

In what city is irrelevant. Whereas we should be asking how we got here. How we blossomed oriental fantasies like phantoms on our elbows. Notice how the flowers yellow with us in this room. Notice how we yellow. *Come here!* Notice how a hand could want so much of all this yellow. Notice how six hands could wait their turn. A waist can turn in three directions—thunder, wind, hellfire. How much do we turn upon our beds? How much hatred can we hold? One hour? How much more?



By the time he locked my yellow throat upon his cock, I had recently committed to my memory the words to “Hope There’s Someone” by Antony and the Johnsons.

I would also learn four minutes evenly repeated over six cock sucking months can make a new song out my mouth.

His roommates stood before the doorway. Then they took me out for barbeque ranch chicken wings. I can’t remember when, before or after, but my hands humming to: “Hope there’s someone who’ll take care of me / when I die, will I go? / Hope there’s someone who’ll set my heart free / nice to hold when I’m tired.”

There, I said it.



The city is still irrelevant.

We go out dancing, flirt with strangers, go home lonely.

In his film called *Pigs and Battleships* (1961), Imamura Shōhei comments on “obscenity” post-World War II with Kinta’s girlfriend Haruko: after dancing, she is raped by three white men.

There, I said it.

“There’s a ghost on the horizon when I go to bed. / How can I fall asleep tonight? How will I rest my head?”

Forget all that we have ever known about each other.

Forget the urine down my legs.

Forget the spider on the ceiling.

Forget what was recorded.

Don't forget the music.

Don't forget its rhythm.

Someone asked me once, "Why didn't you bite down?"

To which I closed my eyes.

The body loosens. How we hold each other to our shadows in the light.

I lied.

It did not hurt.

After some time, I liked it.

We, the wretched take all truths to be erased, except
sounds of panting. Let the gods descend, strike us,
spark a dawn out of our mouths, six yellow dawns.
Notice all our arrows pointed at the sun, splitting up
that sun. Out we fall.

We, the wretched burn a new preamble:

And I'll come back for my people.

Sophia Terazawa's *I AM NOT A WAR* won the 2015 Essay Press Digital Chapbook Contest, selected by Rosebud Ben-Oni. Her work has appeared recently in *Entropy*, *The Wanderer*, *Powder Keg*, *Cosmonauts Avenue*, *Poor Claudia*, and elsewhere. She is pursuing an MFA in Poetry at the University of Arizona. Visit sophiaterazawa.com.