

The life story was a story told by many people in the valley. Biography and autobiography were written down and given to the heyimas or the lodge as an offering, a gift of life. Commonplace as most of them were, they were a “hinge” or intersection of private, individual, historical lived-time with communal, impersonal, cyclical being-time, and so were a joining of temporal and eternal, a sacred act.

Ursula K. Le Guin, *Always Coming Home*

Thank fuck! An entire tooth, including bifurcated root, is excavated from the soft surrounding tissues where it was embedded. And he is propelled from me, by the co-operative counterforce of extraction. Back, so I can slip away out the open bedroom door into the shabby narrow short hallway, down the fucked staircase. Passing over, passing through. I'm stunned by the ironic realisation that inaction is the probable solution/course of action. A Taoist truth is unravelling. Unable to follow this through, though; I'm a force/action-hound.

After the performance, we were estranged in an airport-esque leisure complex of the port of Hull. Going up and down escalators, perusing rails of clothes and shoes on sale: soft leathers and mocassins, shoes for domestic comfort, shoes to relax in, shoes in hues of beige, tan and ochre. Not in my size. Not like TK MAXX which always would cater to my size 8s. Self-service gourmet coffee and sweet treats are served in the venue. You take a palm sized pinch of grounds, knead it in your hand, open the coffee drawer, insert the now-putty-textured matter, close the drawer and it is transformed into intensely rich black coffee percolated into hand-thrown, wabi-sabi ceramic cups. It's an apex neoliberal luxury to consume in this way. People are queuing outside to experience it. I feel unbelievably privileged, awkward. To partake of it is to be complicit in its power.

So, I've lost my keys, am feeling around in my pockets as panic spreads. So many nice reassuring men dressed smartly everywhere are offering to praise or help me. Out on the streets, standing by a parked car, climbing in, a passenger, driving through the night streets of this once-major city. Like the ashes of my grandparents are buried in East Riding soil, a piece of my heart is buried here. In The Avenues or the shale shore of the River Humber. Walking, she addresses the Princes Quay shopping centre; I tell an apocryphal tale of my childhood: when this (to my tiny mind) precarious glass structure was being constructed I swore never to enter for fear of it collapsing into the choppy opaque brown river water beneath it.

A food lorry drives over two parked cars but nobody is injured. The lorry simply glides over and the cars fit snugly within its cavernous underbelly. A swimming pool. A sadistic man's house collapsing. Scent of smoke and then the chimney stack falling in on itself, *a controlled demolition*, then a horizontal double glazed sliding door shutting tight in front of it. Shutting it in/out. Calling age into question. Downstairs, the bathroom is narrow and long: an old bath, piss-yellow tiles rising up to the ceiling, exposed brick, steps outside on which K poses in knickers and I take her picture. Gravity keeps shifting and sometimes the whole universe shunts forward/back jolts or swings into a different orbit, but everyone recovers from it.

A young C sits behind me for the sadistic pool-house man's speech, flops his leg over mine in a gesture of uncommon intimacy. Our heads are close together as we watch abstract and actual destruction play out. A man wants a woman with blue hair but she's going back to her older husband. She's dressed in a rainbow striped puff-ball dress from Tomo Koizumi's Fall 19 collection, like Dudabeat at carnival. She sashays past her lover, he's ushered to a paddling pool of rainbow sand, like those 80s holiday trinkets, and proceeds to stroke his monster dick to climax. His dick is the size of my bedside lamp. Flipping through magazines in a state of panic because I'm late and my boss is that sadistic pool man; he's twisting something in his hands with which to beat me. The ballerina daughter of the family I saw outside the collapsing house appears in montage over a double spread, posing in a purple leotard and tutu like a Mugler catsuit for infants.

On my way out of the university where I have been J's teaching assistant. I have lined my slip-on sandals with greaseproof paper & slip about; I look down, the heels are unevenly crushed stubs. E is naked and rushes into the classroom pale and slender asking for the correct receptor for a tiny device that needs inserting: yes, I have one, this one should fit: I lend him mine: *bring it back here tomorrow*. I'm deciding what to take home for the evening and what to leave at the university. J has left their small black leather work shoes in my case, which moves me. They remind me of the chunky-heeled *Red or Dead* shoes with asymmetric laces from *Schub*, which I wore for school in the 1990s. They've invited me to accompany them on this gig because they're nervous/anxious/reluctant. I try to be useful and suggest ideas/ways I can put them at ease. In truth, it's tiring, but feels worth navigating in spite of fraudulence (I know my (non-)place in academia).