

AN ATTEMPT AT SOMETHING AT LEAST RESEMBLING PEACE

OLIVER DAVID

On my way home from work I am next to the runoff canal that stretches
from one end of town to the next
Cutting straight through poor urban planning from where the well-to-dos
live at the foot of the mountain, to Grape Day park where friends of mine
have slept when no where else will take them
Like a line graph of declining social demography.
The water moves in the direction opposite to me, making it seem to not
move at all
It turns to stained glass resin and suddenly everything is cardboard,
cloths, ceramic, manmade and breakable
Riding past the rows of trees I reach my hand out to brush a branch.
It shatters and shards rain down in every direction
Tissue paper leaves flutter to the ground and blow away
I am cotton or paper, something soft
It starts to rain and I am sliced through by knives
Slowly we fall, the leaves and I, to the drain ditch below Bits of us catching
on the fence and clinging to the ground.
We lie there among the discarded mattresses and strollers among reeds,
coke cans, cigarette butts
Now I have become myself a waste of the water that gave me a plastic
thing around the turtles neck
A clumped knot of hair clogging my shower drain
Something that was once part of something and now cannot be put back
The mirror shows me incongruent multitudes of parts, any
of which could be mine but none recognizable
None of them fit together
Head on top of shoulders on top of too much chest and narrow hips
and stretched out thighs like the worlds shittiest paper doll Skinny
useless ankles and feet that are never the right size
The space I am meant to fill feels always misshapen and far from where I
am
The faucet is left on too long and fills the sink to overflow, spilling out on
the tile floor

A waste of the water I use
The pieces float home on the thin stream
Home now, with everything flesh again, everything whole
I try to drown myself in California rain
I let my mouth close and turn my face towards the sky in surrender
Hold my breath and let the sparse droplets fall in my eyes and hair, let
them drip down the back of my neck.
But surprise It didn't work, and thank god for failures
Thank god for this time that I lost
To think: if it had worked then I never would have enjoyed being in the
rain,
Nor seen the passing clouds and the sunset against them once everything
had cleared up
The candy colored sky turning the landscape slowly black and featureless
against it
And I again walk inside once this is over with
To a world all my own making where the warmth of my room lies in wait,
and with it is sleep; neither being the menace they once were, nor are
the the fly trap I lie in helpless for hours.
I dream and wake and dream again and for a while it is plenty
When I wake there is no wanting presence beside me
I take up all the space on my bed and do not feel selfish for it
I do not dwell in the empty spaces beside me any longer; I hold my own
And I treasure it though it will not last
Just a moment to hold onto when I again wished to be washed away
To know that I can be both alone and ok
That the lonely isn't everything and there is still another sunset to see
tomorrow
I pray it will be enough.
I pray for gentle rains.