

...Of conquest, resonance and falling: Notes on Some Left

I

There is a hum and slow crackle, perhaps like the sound that would be produced if a bee was wooing a flame. It is dark, yet shards of light dance upon the ceiling. Two figures stand by windows at the edge of this room; soon these bodies fold into halves. Partially hung outside, they become a swaying gaze that devours the goings-on in other windows. It is too late for dinner and too early for bed.

About 25 bodies breathe together in this room; sounds of *Ruyschstraat* at nighttime blend with the acoustic landscape set up by Sung Hwan Kim and dogr. Now, a figure lies on the floor - almost dead. A pool of voyeurs surround Him, staring at His tight chest and waiting... Beside Him a T-shirt hangs onto a lamp.

II

We walked up the snaking stairway at 22:20 and removed our shoes in an obedient fashion. Leaving half conversations at the door, we entered this room; feeling carpet beneath our feet and carrying hesitant silences. There were no introductions.

Kim told stories like a master weaver, the warp and weft entwined, then parted to construct patterns that were intricate. The loom here is concurrently visual and sonic. It allows for delays, overwriting and shuttling. Some narratives appear familiar and yet every time you think you know what might happen next, he cuts and sutures; misses a turn or walks diagonally. Like the mirror that reveals an alien self.

At one corner of this room, we see that She is holding a mirror. She crawls toward us, a watery smile and piercing eyes. She sees each of us through this contraption. Yet, I only see images from an elsewhere: stale flowers, windswept hair, a lover's quarrel - everything but the mirror.

III

This may or may not be a living room, but it doesn't matter because we are *not* just here. For now, we are within a cavernous mind that is choreographing a dance of ghosts. A suspended umbilical seeking connection, drenched in tones of liquid static.

There is painful screeching. Then it halts, resonance takes over. And here too the cuts produce fresh scars, some are almost pleasant. He takes that T-shirt off the lamp and walks toward Her. Together, they appear as cold steel objects yet somehow belong, like a secret love letter stashed away in a cardboard box.

She dips Her toe into the vase with a graceful neck. She cannot enter, a full void persists. The scene reminds me of that fable with a thirsty crow who threw pebbles into a pitcher in order to raise the water level. But She does not devise a clever strategy; She seems content to circle its periphery, exploring its thingness.

IV

Amidst song lines that twist, we are made to form an erratic chorus. To read of Fräulein Knuchel's eccentricities and predicaments, but together we construct another text. Some guttural, others too shrill - we remain out of sync in our togetherness. Forming a sort of cordon in the middle of this room; slicing it once more...

At least, if the blind follow the blind they will get somewhere. When the sighted get together, they risk staying in place. But he doesn't let that happen. As we read, He takes some of us through another stairway and into a bedroom. The lights stay off, so we form a circle of listening shadows. He speaks, but to no one in particular. Flitting between topics like a restless teenager, He tells us of movies, imperialism and American culture.

V

The scene changes but echoes remain. It feels like we're watching Kim's drawings come to life. An owl, a bloody torso, a crying tree. Wandering between the strangeness of a morning dream and the devastation of failure - an intoxicating seepage surrounds us.

Another figure enters, with an axe. Steadying his aim, then raising the weapon. *He* falters but continues this painstaking routine. Sometimes the wood chips, at other times, splinters fly. Filling this room with the sounds of a cracking whip and paper cuts; *his* gestures evoke attempts at breaking down a wild horse.

VI

When we walk toward the stairway there is a body on the floor below. It is as though a being has lived and died in our absence. The paranoia of missing time remains unresolved. Our footprints form an invisible web around this body.

He picks up the vase; she pours white liquid into it. Its transparency is obliterated like the evacuation of a spirit from the body. Held close to his chest, it becomes an uncanny protrusion. They can never blend.

Some Left is neither a loop nor a highway; it bears the rhythms of a deep fall. A series of irrepressible ruptures - Falling is like this.

Natasha Ginwala
Amsterdam, August 2011

Postscript

He/Him = Matthew Infante
She/Her = Jieun Rim

he = Sung Hwan Kim

He/His (V) = the man with an axe

we = audience

Music: David Michael DiGregorio (aka dogr)

This Room: Ruyschstraat 4-III, Amsterdam Date: 25-26 June, 2011

The Text (IV): Robert Walser - Fräulein Knuchel

This piece of writing is a memory composition, not a reconstruction. Hence, it is a resemblance of what took place at Ruyschstraat 4-III as part of Sung Hwan Kim's ongoing performance project - *Some Left*. It willfully breaks away from a linear mode of narrativity. Privileging hindsight and flights into inexactness such that, looking back involves experiencing anew.