

APHASIA

Sometimes it is easier to be mad than to feel sad.
I feel like I am running away into relative obscurity.
I feel like this is okay.

I step out of my house and there is a deluge going on.
I must swim from my car to the supermarket door—
just to grab an avocado, please.
Everyone I pass in the parking lot stares at me like they
mean it.
Why can't I speak to them?
Their eyes are so harsh and my defenses, so weak.

Language is rough.
Trouble formulating words.
This is aphasia.

Might could be the last time I ever write you.

I came home and I cut the avocado and I took out the pit
and it slipped to the floor and I cried.
The oven preheated to 425,
but nothing really changed.

It all stayed basically the same.

What are you doing now?
I mean at this particular moment in time.

Outside there are trees and raccoons,
but in here there is just me.
Maybe I should run away.
If I reach another country, where they must believe me
when I say:

I am a wild fox.

I will burrow in the yard and I will bark when I think of
you.
I will hide myself away.
And most important of all, nobody will disturb me.

And I never said that our promises mattered much,
but you did say that you would never leave me.

STRANGER

In the exact center
of my twin bed
in my parents' house
at 3 am

the darkness wouldn't let me rest;
The anxiety hasn't abandoned me yet.

Hazy memories of the days when love was a sacred verse
and youth was a flag that I raised each night.

Sitting here
with my legs crossed
I feel as though my limbs have condensed
into a single, vacuous organ.

I feel
incapacitated.
Unaware of my surroundings
and a dust that's accumulating on the carpet.

And a dust that's accumulating on the carpet.

One day you left
and I didn't realize.

I am going to move to a foreign land

where the standard customs are unfamiliar to me
and the holidays hold no special meaning.

I am going to move somewhere where I won't remember
you.

I will be a stranger.
In every sense
of the word.

TODAY YOU TOOK A PICTURE OF ME

I have often wished that there weren't any images of me,
that my parents had been Indians
who wouldn't let anybody take a picture of their son
for it would steal his livelihood
and his soul.

If all the world is an image,
then I want to be done with it already.

Today you took a picture of me
and then
you told me how handsome I was in it.

It's a lie.
I wasn't handsome in it.
I wasn't in it at all.

I don't want there to be images of me.
I just want you to kiss me.