



Triptych

Nainai says I have good eyesight
because when I was born
Mama fed me fish eyes
and nothing else.

At the supermarket, the trout floated up in tanks
and opened and closed their mouths

like flowers. Mama chose the one
with the biggest eyes and I

felt their bodies glisten
in my hands. We tied plastic bags

with rubber bands, and like this,
we drowned fish in air.

At home Mama plucked out
the eyes and served them to me
on a plate with
nothing else.

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She said,
eat until you are full.

The airport in Shanghai
plays a projection of
a digital koi pond
on the ceiling: holographic scales
swim across blank
tiles. They look just like
real fish except
glossier. If you can generate
aura in a non-place,
then maybe there is no difference
between meditation
and oblivion.

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I'll still buy this trout
and grope it in the dark. It clenches
and unclenches
in my hands like a beating
heart.

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In college, I dated a frat boy
who told me about a hazing ritual
where they were forced
to transfer a raw egg
mouth-to-mouth all the way
around a circle without breaking
the yolk. He said every time
it broke they had to start over,
and it took all night before
they finally got it right.

I thought it sounded spiritual,
like sharing water after sex.

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I am looking for a belonging
as visceral as that.

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