

HIT ME AGAIN

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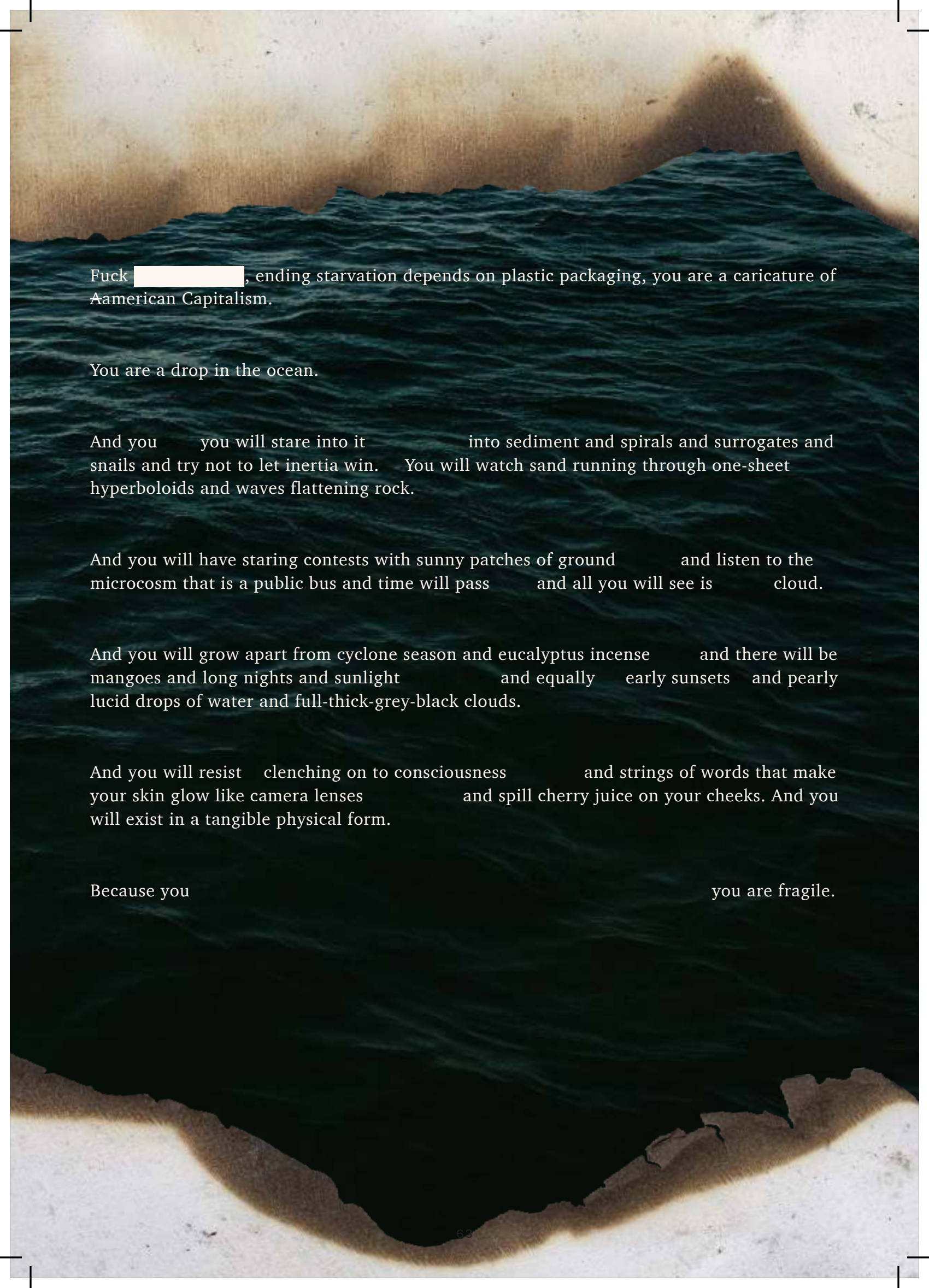
HIT ME AGAIN



*R*  
*I*  
*S*  
*I*  
*N*  
*G*

Ruby Smith





Fuck [redacted], ending starvation depends on plastic packaging, you are a caricature of American Capitalism.

You are a drop in the ocean.

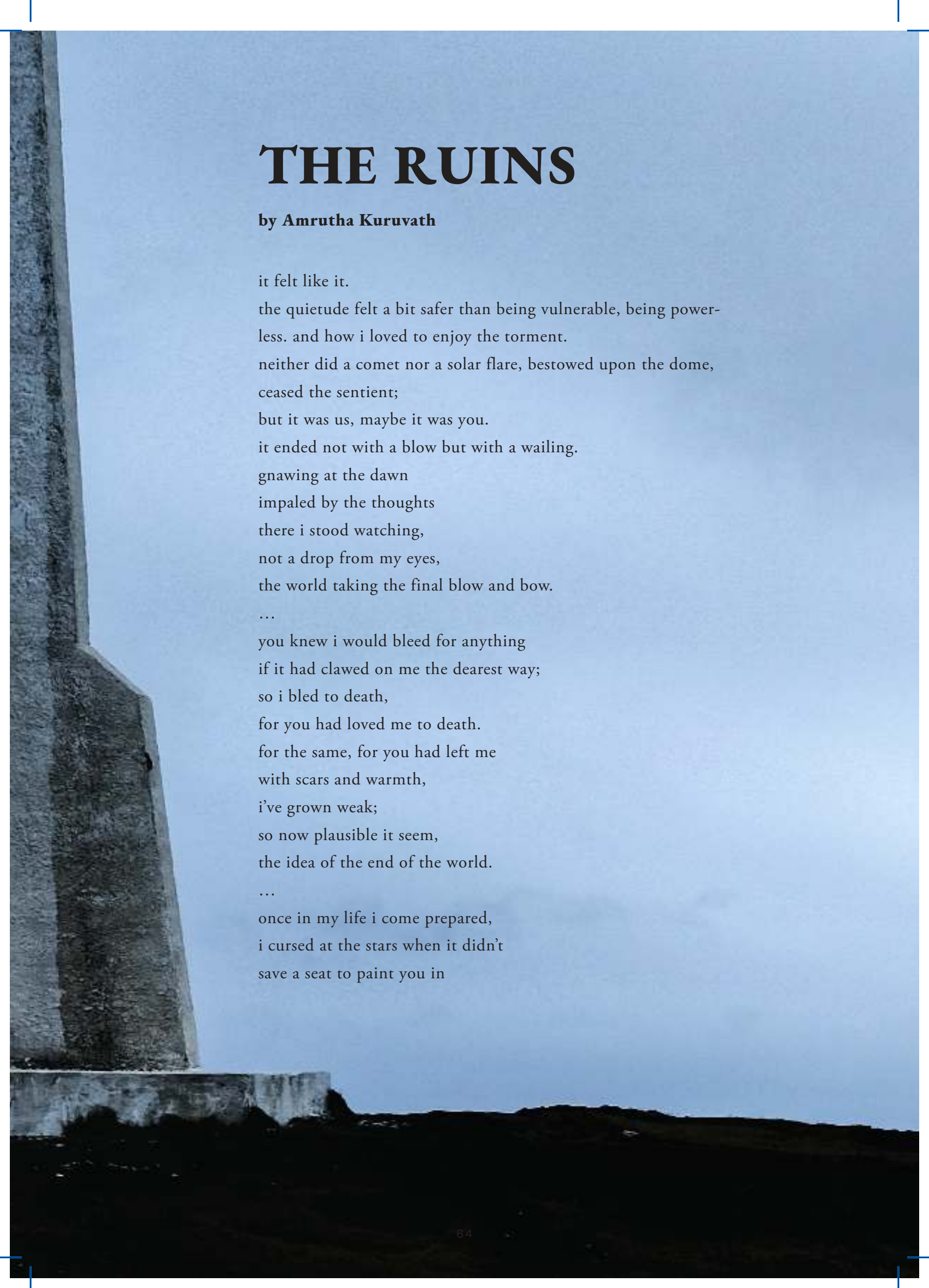
And you      you will stare into it      into sediment and spirals and surrogates and snails and try not to let inertia win.      You will watch sand running through one-sheet hyperboloids and waves flattening rock.

And you will have staring contests with sunny patches of ground      and listen to the microcosm that is a public bus and time will pass      and all you will see is      cloud.

And you will grow apart from cyclone season and eucalyptus incense      and there will be mangoes and long nights and sunlight      and equally      early sunsets      and pearly lucid drops of water and full-thick-grey-black clouds.

And you will resist      clenching on to consciousness      and strings of words that make your skin glow like camera lenses      and spill cherry juice on your cheeks. And you will exist in a tangible physical form.

Because you      you are fragile.

A photograph of a concrete structure, possibly a wall or a pillar, against a clear blue sky. The structure is dark and textured, with a sharp edge. The sky is a uniform light blue. The overall mood is contemplative and somber.

# THE RUINS

by Amrutha Kuruvath

it felt like it.

the quietude felt a bit safer than being vulnerable, being power-  
less. and how i loved to enjoy the torment.

neither did a comet nor a solar flare, bestowed upon the dome,  
ceased the sentient;

but it was us, maybe it was you.

it ended not with a blow but with a wailing.

gnawing at the dawn

impaled by the thoughts

there i stood watching,

not a drop from my eyes,

the world taking the final blow and bow.

...

you knew i would bleed for anything

if it had clawed on me the dearest way;

so i bled to death,

for you had loved me to death.

for the same, for you had left me

with scars and warmth,

i've grown weak;

so now plausible it seem,

the idea of the end of the world.

...

once in my life i come prepared,

i cursed at the stars when it didn't

save a seat to paint you in



i cursed at the smiles when it didn't  
draw the same moon.  
i cursed at the night when it didn't  
manifested your silhouette.  
i tried to crawl back from the mud  
to the mud where you laid,  
yet i stumbled where the same mud  
choked me to death, death,  
but not the one i liked.  
so once in my life i come prepared,  
for the end of the world  
for the kind of conclusion i craved.  
after-all the idea of the end of the world doesn't sound bad at all;  
for the cosmos between us shrinks i get to see you again,  
this time the kind of death i dance to. and how i loved to enjoy the ache. the doomsday is near  
carving the trail leading to you  
and once in my life i come prepared i come prepared for the wrecking.

and in a flash we're at skyfall  
there's a soft lullaby blended with the death notorious yet soothing  
inhumane yet calming  
brutal yet soft.  
through the shatters and matters there i find

a soul dancing amidst the ruins.

# 一个钱包

By Fangjie Xu

世界末日似乎对亚洲小孩来说常常到来  
钱包的丢失  
挂科的学习  
与父母的争吵  
与朋友的意见相左

所有不尽如人意的事都有可能导致不良的后果  
本不该花费的时间  
糟糕的情绪  
恨海情天，貌合神离的家庭  
乱作一团的人际关系

钱包不知所踪  
世界末日来临  
银行卡有没有被盗刷呢

成绩挂科了  
世界末日来临  
导师会不会通过我的补考申请呢

与父母吵架，控制不住自己的情绪  
世界末日来临  
打回去又能说什么呢

发现要好的朋友三观不同  
世界末日来临  
我要不要离开他们呢

可是读到这里的小孩啊  
钱包丢了就努力去找  
成绩挂了就积极补救  
与父母吵架了就各自冷静过后再去说开  
与朋友三观不同就跟随本心决定他/她的去留

那是你的钱包  
你的成绩  
你的父母  
你的朋友

一切因你而有意义  
很高兴  
很幸运  
是你

# A wallet

By Fangjie Xu

It seems that the end of the world often comes to Asian children  
Losing their wallets  
Failing in studies  
Quarreling with their parents  
Disagreeing with their friends

All unsatisfactory matters may lead to adverse consequences  
Time that should not have been spent  
A bad mood  
A family with deep-seated hatred and love, but outwardly united  
A chaotic web of interpersonal relationships

My wallet has gone missing  
The end of the world is coming  
Has my bank card been fraudulently used?

Failing the exam  
The end of the world is coming  
Will my supervisor approve my application for a supplementary exam?

Had an argument with parents and lost control of emotions  
The end of the world is coming  
If I call them back, what can I say?

Close friends have different values  
The end of the world is coming.  
Should I leave them?

But my lovely kids who read until here  
If you lose your wallet, try your best to find it  
If you fail an exam, take active measures to make up for it  
If you have a quarrel with a parent, you should calm down and then talk it over  
If your friend has different values from yours, follow your heart to decide whether to keep the friendship or not

That's your wallet  
Your grades  
Your parents  
Your friends

Everything becomes meaningful because of you  
It's so cheerful  
It's so lucky  
It's you



# *Oblivion*

Paige Jenkins



The burning scent of rope like flesh and my  
white-knuckled grip bleeds into every  
drought-addled fissure of cracked earth.

Sinking deeper into the ferocious whirlpool of doubt.

The horizon piercing the tapestry of  
wayward stars and startling waves,  
pulls at the needle flickering between the destination  
and the footprints that are slowly  
distorting

and

sliding

back into the gentle oblivion of

unknown

and

forgotten.



The wind whispers its secrets to anyone who will  
pause long enough to listen,  
really listen.

They dance all night long,  
the secrets and the sails,  
a matrimonious waltz turns to scandalous tango.

Rose petals left in the wake of each crescendo and  
crashing

descent

into hostile silence as the final flutter  
flees the scene of its crime of passion,  
scarlet mars in rings,

blood diamonds disguised in daggers that  
strike through to the ornate hilt,  
splintering bone and  
painting

hems,

coats and

feathered quills haphazardly.



What is truly heavier?

The pound of feathers or flesh?

Light as sound,

rocking slowly back and forth,

fluttering in silence marking its descent into

nothingness.

Seconds.

Mere seconds of a life,

a glimpse of all the

Possibilities

before a single breath knocks them all away.

At least people stop to watch the fall.

Doused in gasoline and awe,

both a choking hazard,

both leave you lightheaded and grateful for the next time.

