

“Poesis” by Sofia Escobar ’24

I.

It, she of, in gap midrush. Me,
The pages, letters. Schwa diasporas,
Haibun conjunctions. Little title
Unnamed, traduction.

II.

Working conditions, incipit, cardinals.
Philadelphia Wireman findings.

III.

Gap.

IV.

Segno m-m-ry. Athwart | facing pages.

Intellectual autobiography: Fosse.
Serving Writ: renga, deixis

V.

RECTO

VI.

VERSO

VII.

“Cento.”

VIII.

Pra
Ede
Lle?
Pre
De
Lla.

IX.

Georgics and Shadow.¹

¹ The titles of Rachel Blau DuPlessis's *Drafts 1–38*, as a poem.

I.

The gap of it. I T. She is of the gap,
strangled by the space of unknown,
before and after. The space between
“I” and “They” is a tightly bound noose
cuddling her throat, braided together into
the rope of lost breath. *Inhale deeply*^{sssswwww}
Having ideas but nothing to say. She is left
with the pages and their marks of effort—
the letters taunt her. Being her own muse
was appalling. She sewed the alphabet into
intricate embroideries of interests, and
meaning made her fingers bleed, envious
of the schwa that ties the strings together,
free of the stress that drains her lifeless.
The ə in her poetry scribbles hahahahaha
at how *easy* it is *to be*. pō

ə

trē—What a smart little poet. He mocks
her just like the poets of Japan and their
simplicity of haibun conjunctions. *I want
to be so complicated but look so easy*, she
says. And but if. There is so much that
needs to connect which cannot fit into the
eye of her needle, pulled into one word. Oh,
even the name tricks her. What should she
name it! Me, the pages? Cento? The work is
but hers if the muse is Japanese. Should
she title it Japan? Haiku? Oh, that’s it—

ポエシス

II.

Her finger is a pin-pricked egg, the words
squeezing out of the hole, passing from the
inside to the outside, like a rabbit under a
fence leaving from the neighbor’s yard right
into the back of yours. The vertebraic essence
of the words crack off into individual joints
until the gaps between need to be sewn back
together. The blood from her fingertips melts
down the spine and seeps into the spurs of the
once firm structure that made the phrases so strong.
The rabbit doesn’t suffer from back pain the way
she does. It’s hard to lose something that you
never had in the first place.

C

E

R

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R.

It, she of, in gap midrush. Me,
the pages, letters. Schwa diasporas,
Haibun conjunctions.

Before she knows it, all the animals
come out to play. The squirrels are
playing tag on the powerlines, the
caterpillars are making Swiss cheese
of the leaves, and the cardinals are so
damn loud, their feathers painted red
like the reminder that her blood is still
dripping down her hand from sewing
all day. Would she invest in a thimble
if she knew it could be used more than
once a month? What if she could string
the letters with rubber bands rather than
thread for once—tougher material that
doesn't snap so easily under pressure. Oh,
how beautiful an art she could make
from the findings of the Philadelphia
Wireman. Maybe she would even poke
barbed wired into the eye or the hinge of
a door that welcomes her guests in. *Please,
join me for the adventure.*

III.

The white void sucks nothing and
somehow everything into it. The sea of liquified
pearls drip into a hard, flattened
sheet for the creator's

project.
They come rolling out of the oyster's mouth like
regurgitated bird feed. her papers

crack the pearls can only when under pressure,
take so much.

drip

drip

drip

or

I

am

am I nothing

the worms?

IV.

Segno
Segno
Segno
Segno?

Sgn? Oh, a sign.

Segno

Segno

Segno

Segno?

Sgn? Oh, a sign.

Segno

Segno

Segno

Segno?

Sgn? Wait, what was it?

Why am I forgetting what that means?

S-g-n? Amnesia is a loss
of memories and
facts that is rare
and curable.

Oh, it's in her
brain; that's
why she can't
write lately.

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It's time she finally carries out her necessary duty—what does she find so fascinating about poetry in Japan? She has never written a haiku; the amnesiac being she embodied led her to never remember what a syllable means. Don't get her started on renga and the switch between personalities of one poet to the next. *I want to be as poetic as Hatsui Shizue.* Maybe one day she will regain consciousness of the beautiful art that is woven in the short lines of a haiku and she'll remember the difference between a haikai and a haiku. She should love the advantage of only writing half of it—it's all she seems to be able to accomplish lately. Her great muse could lobotomize her and secretly drill the poesis into the fleshy wrinkle in her skull, perhaps something about time or space, the here and the there. Omniscience—the

science of everything. Fuck poetry, she wants
to be an omniscientist.

V.

Why are we over here?
Aren't we usually over—

VI.

There? Wait, how did that—

VII.

“Silently time passes.
The only life I have
submits to its power.”
“Scattered petals gather on
the road more colorful
than the blossoms on the
branches.”

For further examples, please refer to page 1, sections I to IX.
Or just to IX.

VIII.

The muse pumps strength
into the veins that run
through the writer's
fingers, shedding the skin
of poetic magic onto the
yellow painted wood that
draws lines of nonsense into
the void of melted trees.

Beloved muse, she gets down
on her knees and prays to you
at night like a sinful husband
begging for forgiveness for
straying. Do not covet thy
neighbor's wife or their poetry.
Maybe one day you'll come
down to Earth and kiss the top
of her forehead, restoring faith.

She digs for you in books of famous
writers from Sapporo, Kyoto, and
Osaka. She sifts through the lost
names of Basho, Yoshitoshi, but most
importantly Yosano Akiko. The feminine
muse plucked at her heart strings deeper
than anyone else and rang music that not

only silenced the doubtful men, but made them deaf.

Behold, great muse, she has proven her immense dedication to you and only hopes you return the favor one day in her honor. Lay out your desires in lineation and she'll scatter them across the page as the greatest deception ahead of not actually believing in you. You poor illusion, she never needed you! After paving the way for her in glass shards, she has picked them up and melted them down.

You sit upon the top of the predella like a perfect god waiting for his prisoners, but she was never walking up to you, always further down and down until she was as far away as possible. You placed her in glass slippers and told her *run*, expecting them not to break, and if they did, to let the glass break her skin and *just keep running*. So now, she slips cracked glass into your shoes and when you say you're in pain, she thinks *imagine how I felt?*

Now, she sits at the bottom step of your thousand-foot shrine, sewing her letters along it to form the quilted masterpiece you thought you made for so long. The blood from her fingers fills the chalice and she calls to you, *drink my blood, and I will raise you*. Oh, how she not only flipped the table, but deconstructed it, melded it out of her flesh and blood, then presented it new for you to eat at. Swallow her work, muse, and digest it knowing you will never be even an eighth of her.

IX.

When she was five years old, her mother bought her a marigold and told her *when it dies, so will you*. Terrified of being in the dirt with her new plant, she hovered over its leaves like the black shawl of blocked sunlight. Day by day, she sprinkled water over the top of her petals and whispered in her roots *please don't give up on me*. Her mother laid out the instructions of how to care for her flower, but she skipped the overwatering section as she insisted she knew when to stop giving. Her marigold died four days later. ◦ When she was nine years old, she wrote in a journal for the first time and her mother told her when the pencil can't write anymore, neither could she. So she wrote with the dulllest tip for weeks, saving the lifespan of the graphite by spreading out how often she wrote. ◦ When she was sixteen years old, she lost her passion for writing. She blamed her mother and the marigold and the pencil but never herself. *Why cant i write?*

She fed her flower
everyday and even
when she had a gift
to start over, it kept
on dying. Her need
to write liked to die.

I still remember you as a little girl who overwaters plants because
she doesn't know when to stop giving. – Trista Mateer (24 of 30)

So now, everything
is dead, but her soul
sits in the dirt that
grounded the flower
of passion and her
creativity. She was
her own feminine and
unapologetic muse.