

TO NOT ROT AFTER DEATH

To be mummified alive, to be a floating corpse, this is what you must do. First, boil grain. Next, climb mountains. The mountains should be clean and fresh, covered in snow. Then, walk. Walk again. Walk all day. Eat only nuts. After a while, stop eating them, too. Subsist only on resin and the barks of pine trees. They will be your preservatives. Your fingernails will grow thin. The muscles inside your eardrums will soften and you will hear as clearly as is imaginable. You will hear a mosquito from leagues away. Your organs will shrink. Your stomach will shrink so much that a single walnut will be difficult to digest. Without this hard labor, the fat of your body will absorb the water of your body as you starve to death. Too much water will rot your body. The dead body rots when it absorbs water. You must also reduce how much you drink. Endure only with the strength of your muscles and organs. Your body will be so light that when you try to take a bath it will float on water. Someone will have to press you down so that your body will sink into the tub. There won't be pain. It will be tiring, and your stomach will prickle now and then. You will meditate. Meditation will serve to stop your metabolism. You will drink tea made from the red sap of poison ivy. Because you won't have the flesh of your skin for the ivy's poison to swell in, the color of the ivy will seep into your stomach and intestines. Enjoy bathing in hot springs until breath leaves your body. Hot springs filled with arsenic are preferred. That will kill the germs, bacteria, and potential maggots. All the pink inside your body will be killed. After many years of this process, taken step by step, you will become a completely dried-out mummy, and the breath of your life will slip out of your body. You will be sitting upright when you die. No one will know. You will be so light that you won't return to earth.

Your body will be preserved for centuries and millennia. You will be a tourist attraction. You will even be worshipped.

THE NAME OF POETRY

The country of poetry is where a name is erased.

Where one can say, I am the scribe of an invisible girl.

Where one can get away with saying, I write down whatever the girl says.

A poet who came to talk to me said, "Please say your own name, then draw your future and tell us about it."

The poetry of 'I' is where the name of 'I' is erased.

The 'I' there is the one who is most terrified of the name of 'I.'

Poetry is the language of the one who has dropped beneath one's name.

Because one's name carries death.

Because in poetry 'my' is the one who can't stand 'I' the most.

Once one has run far away from a name, poetry finally begins.

Poetry goes beyond a 'name,' beyond identity, toward the pattern I drew as I was washed out into anonymity, the design of that pattern, where verbs and adjectives try to fulfill themselves by drawing patterns inside the design, where pronouns and nouns turn into verbs and scatter. It is the secret of their escape.

A nameless one

A nameless one, s/he whose name no one knows in the world,

The one whose name everyone else has forgotten

Is coming down the valley.

S/he kisses the stream of the valley and drinks its water.

The blue sky clings to his/her sleeves.