

Transparent, I am.

Yuri Muraoka

I sat next to a blind old man who had undergone dialysis and closed my eyes.  
The world went completely dark.  
When I sunk into darkness, I knew that the world was shaking.  
I got slight motion sickness from this vibration.  
In the darkness, I searched for light.  
A light.

One fine day,  
I took pictures of the sky with my phone  
because I got a little uncomfortable when waiting my turn at a mobile phone  
store in Shimokitazawa.  
I wanted to remember the beauty of the light twinkling through the clouds.

In the midst of all the people who were happily coming and going, I was lonely,  
no matter where I was.  
It was meaningless existence.  
Even though I stared at my hands in a daze  
I couldn't see anything because they were transparent.

### **1. The Woman with Light Blue Eyeshadow ( In the conflicting time )**

That day, unconscious me woke up sensing the light on a hospital bed.

Parts of white boxes and black boxes, piled up in my room,  
disappeared and the rest of them floated in the air.  
I had taken a large dose of medication  
because I couldn't bear the horror of 'reality' collapsing beneath my feet.

I met a nurse in the hospital where I was taken to.

She was a woman with heavy suffocating makeup  
and an unusually small body.

In a wheelchair, and unable to move my limbs,  
she handed me a thick book and told me to read it.  
After reading it, I tried to tell the woman about the contents  
but the woman said,  
"Such a book does not exist."

It couldn't be.  
It's the book you just gave me.  
My throat became tight and I could not speak.  
I tried to shout, "No, No" as loudly as possible.  
The woman tried her hardest not to laugh and said,  
"Get your act together!"  
while sneering at me.

Next, the woman handed me a piece of paper and told me to write some words.  
I complied.  
But at the next moment, the words I had supposedly written,  
had disappeared like a thread coming undone.  
I appealed to the woman about it.  
She said,  
"Where is the paper ?"  
Certainly the paper had disappeared.  
Crying, I protested,  
"You're wrong, You're Wrong."

I fell out of my wheelchair and crawled on the ground  
in a desperate attempt to escape from that room,  
but the woman went on ahead of me and stood at the exit  
saying with a voice of annoyance and derision,  
"Hey, come on!"

Hey, where is Nonoho-san?  
Where's Nemu-chan?  
Where's Hana-chan?  
They don't really exist.  
You don't really exist either.

Nonoho, my dear, don't open the door of the black and white room.

My little bird twisted its thin legs in the wire mesh at the bottom,  
dying grotesquely with an ominous squeal.  
Nemu was twisting her body grotesquely, walking strangely.  
A screaming Hana whose eyes were slit open with a cutter.  
I shudder at the things I've loved so much.

They say that anyone who sees their doppelganger will die.  
When I encounter myself again, I think I will die.

## **2. Consultation Room (February 2009)**

It was February 2009 I entered the consultation room for the very first time,  
while holding the hand of just 3-year-old Nemu  
and with Nonoho, my husband, holding a still young Hana in the baby sling.

The doctor said,  
“Imagine a blueprint for your family's ‘future’ in your mind.  
You have to start doing things to get closer to that.”

Because the doctor told me that, I imagined our family picture in the future.  
There were Nemu and Hana, growing up beautifully.  
My husband Nonoho was still the same in middle age.  
But I wasn't there.

I'm the only one who isn't there.  
I'm invisible, I can't see anything.  
As I was crying bitterly,  
little Nemu looked up at me worriedly,  
"Mommy, are you okay?"

After we made love to each other,  
falling apart with ecstasy from the waist down,  
I became pregnant with my daughter Nemu.  
A small refrigerator on its last legs,  
a small table,  
mismatched dishes -  
Life was like playing house.  
And then our second daughter, Hana, was born.  
We become a 'family'.

Occasionally, I have beautiful dreams.  
My daughters lounging in a meadow of yellow-green semen,  
playing cat's cradle with the black and white umbilical cord  
stretching from my transparent vagina.

Occasionally I have happy dreams.  
My little girls saying such things as,  
"Do you want kombu? Do you want pickles?"  
while making a big rice ball for their dad.

Occasionally, I am chased by scary dreams.  
Where's Yuri! I'm going to kill you!  
My father is looking for me.  
I am hiding with bated breath.  
Everyone is angry at me as a bad person.

You're a bad person.

You are a lying human being.

You are... You are...

You are... You are...

Who are you?

Who are YOU?

Who am I?

I am who

I am... I am... I am...

I am

“If you're in so much pain and you want to die, you can die.

It's very sad, but your life belongs to you,”

my young daughter once told me gently.

I was moved to tears because I was so ashamed of myself

and could not forgive myself for making her say such things.

I had no right to feel pain and be sad,

but she hugged me while I sobbed saying,

“It's okay. It's okay.”

I sat next to a blind old man and closed my eyes.

The world went completely dark.

How will the world change next time I open my eyes?

This time I will hold you in my arms when you cry.

I will hug you, rub your back, and say,

"It's okay. It's going to be okay"

(Translation by HONYAKU beat)