

I'VE BEEN A MOTHER NOW FOR NEARLY ONE YEAR. THE EARTH SHATTERING LOVE I FEEL FOR MY DAUGHTER HAS SHARPENED MY COMMITMENT TO PREVENTING AND REVERSING THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD INTO A DAWNING CONFRONTATION AROUND THE CLOCK. THERE ARE SOMETHING LIKE 140 WILDFIRES RAGING ACROSS CANADA AT THE MOMENT. MULTIPLE FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN BURNED TO THE ~~GROUND~~ GROUND. I SCROLLED THROUGH PICTURES AND VIDEOS OF BLOOD RED SKIES, OPAQUE WITH SMOKE. MAYBE IT'S TIED TO THE HOUSEFIRE I ACCIDENTALLY STARTED AS A SMALL CHILD, BUT I LOOK AROUND MY HOUSE AND I SEE EVERYTHING BURNING. ALL THE BOOKS, ART, FURNITURE, AND CERAMICS MADE BY FRIENDS THAT I'VE COLLECTED OVER THE YEARS IN AN ATTEMPT TO BE LESS ALIENATED FROM THE OBJECTS I INTERACT WITH, AND AS A MEANS OF SUPPORTING FRIENDS — A WAY I THINK EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE. I THINK, I THINK OF THE COMMUNE. I THINK OF THE ZAD. I THINK OF TEMPLES BUILT IN CAVES TO AVOID BOMBINGS IN VIETNAM. I HAVE FRIENDS FACING DECADES OF IMPRISONMENT, MOST EVERYONE I KNOW IS ONE MEDICAL EMERGENCY AWAY FROM RUIN. THE FIRES ARE INCREASING, THE FLOODS ARE INCREASING, DROUGHTS ARE INCREASING, THE NUMBERS OF CLIMATE DISASTERS CLIMB WITH EVERY BOMB MY COUNTRY DROPS, EVERY DROVE STRIKE IT FUNDS, EVERY DATA CENTER IT BUILDS. OUR ATTENTION SPANS ARE SO EXHAUSTED, OUR ISOLATION MAKES US FEEL HELPLESS, WE'RE BEING MIRED IN CULTURE WARS ORCHESTRATED BY ~~THE~~ DEATH WORSHIPPERS WHO ARE SO REMOVED FROM THEIR HUMANITY THAT THEY POUR FUEL TO THE FIRE WITH THE THOUGHT THAT THEY CAN ESCAPE TO ANOTHER PLANET. I READ SOMEWHERE THAT ONCE YOU BECOME A PARENT YOU MUST BECOME RESPONSIBLE TO ALL CHILDREN. I THINK OF THE MOTHERS IN GAZA AND THE WEST BANK, DESPERATE TO NURSE AND NURTURE THEIR BABIES IN TENTS, FLEEING BOMBARDMENTS, BEING HUNTED DOWN, THE DESPERATION TO PRODUCE MILK WHILE BEING UNDERNOURISHED YOURSELF. I THINK OF THE BABIES IN VENEZUELA, IN SUDAN, CONGO, CUBA, OF PEOPLE DYING OF HEAT STROKE AND HUNGER ON EVERY CONTINENT. I FEEL GUTTED, I FEEL FURIOUS. I FEEL THE NEED TO CONNECT IN MEANINGFUL WAYS WITH OTHERS — TO SWELL THE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE DEDICATED TO THE EARTH FOR OUR CHILDREN AND FOR ALL THE CHILDREN WHO WE'LL NEVER MEET WHO DESERVE A WORLD UNPOISONED BY GREED AND ITS IMMEASURABLE RUN OFFS CHOKING THIS WORLD AROUND US, HOW DO WE COMMIT TO ONE ANOTHER EN MASSE? HOW DO WE HAVE THE TOUGH CONVERSATIONS, DROP OUT OF THE CHARADE OF

DYING EMPIRES, AND CONSTRUCT THE SYSTEMS OF CARE AND STEWARDSHIP THAT ARE NEEDED TO PREVENT UTTER COLLAPSE? I DON'T WANT TO BE SHOPPING ONLINE FOR THE PERFECT CURTAINS TO SHUT OUT THE WORLD AROUND ME. PEOPLE WHO CONCERN THEMSELVES ONLY WITH PROTECTING THEIR PEACE AND FOCUS ONLY ON THEIR NUCLEAR FAMILY OR THEIR ASSETS ARE LYING TO THEMSELVES. WE MUST FIGHT.

— DIANNA SETTLES

JULY 16, 2026

1:20 AM

Facing Snow

IN WARTIME ONE WEEPS FOR NEW GHOSTS.

& THE MANY MORE YET TO COME

ONE SHALL WEEP WITH.

AN OLD MAN SITS HUMMING TO HIMSELF IN AUTUMN,
TUMULTUOUS CLOUDS HAVE MADE THE THIN EVENING SKY
AN EVEN LOWER CEILING.

FAST SNOW TWIRLS IN THE HAND OF AN UPBEAT WIND.

A WINE LADLE, LYING BESIDE A JAR, NOT GREEN —

GREEN, WHEN FULL.

IN THE STOVE THE FIRE IS RED & ONGOING.

THERE CONTINUES TO BE NO NEWS

FROM MORE THAN

ONE PART OF THE COUNTRY.

NO NEWS.

SIT THEN,
PLUNK IN SORROW,
DRAFT YOUR LETTER MIDAIR.

— DU FU

TRANSLATED BY WONG MAY