

Jihye Rhii

*carriers*

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*Hence breath*

*Then breath*

*Next breath*

Delicate blossoms, crafted from whisper-thin paper and tenderly mounted on slender wires, emerge within a nearly omnivoyant still life. Motionless, yet far from silent. A moment preserved—and thus remembered—encased within a transparent cuboid; its interior lined with cardboard and latex, partially shrouded in foil, held both in place and apart. Protected, demarcated. Deemed worthy! Flowers rise confidently skyward—luminous, upright. Elsewhere, others lie still, reduced to stems—slumped, burdened, beautiful in collapse. Is this an ending? A farewell? Or part of a continuous, cyclical dance?

The sculptures gesture toward a presence that has quietly slipped away, reflecting the artist's deep engagement with familial relationships, life stories, and the transience and therefore mutability of memories across overlapping temporalities. "We don't know how many layers of time have passed," spoken at the beginning of one of her films, evokes a stratified notion of time—accumulative rather than sequential, recursive rather than linear, porous rather than fixed... Within this framework, the grandmother is invoked as an archetype: a point of connection, of care, a life-bringer and storyteller—carrier of cycles, perhaps, or simply of continuity?

States continue to shift, from containment to sensation. What was once enclosed becomes dispersed: in the adjacent room, the air is noticeably cool. A subtle yet persistent scent permeates the air—unmistakable, almost intrusive. What lingers where presence fades?

A palpable tension remains—hovering between aliveness, substitution, and regeneration. Perhaps what might become perceptible in this in-between state is not a clear image, but a trace: a temperature, a rhythm, a breath—something felt rather than seen. Drawn from *Autobiography of Death*, a collection of 49 poems by Kim Hyesoon, *Asphyxiation* serves as both the entry and exit point of this text. Each poem marks a day in the forty-nine-day journey a spirit undertakes after death, before transitioning into reincarnation. But what, in absence, can truly be carried? What can be reconstructed, revisited—rebreathed? And what is it, exactly, that we choose to remember in the midst of change?

*Death breathes and you dream but*

*it's time to remove the ventilator from death*

*it's time to shatter the dream with a hammer*

—Kim Hyesoon, *Asphyxiation* (Day Forty-Six)

*Text by Theresa Roessler*