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# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Janice Lee: Three Poems

Janice Lee · Wednesday, February 12th, 2020

### ?? or GHOST

from *Separation Anxiety*

we exist in relation to—  
or, we shuddered  
as forever stared back  
our demons think something has gone  
??, gone  
layered on thin  
once we lost it all forever  
even as we trained ourselves  
to need the animal  
less  
no need  
to gaze softly  
even if you are going to be cutting it  
all down

\*

a cavitation speaks  
too  
with the susurrations of what we call  
compensation

in a prophecy:

thousands of sheep and goats and camels and oxen and sons and daughters  
thousands upon thousands  
bleeding in the dead of night

in a prophecy:

my head is split open with an axe  
and the deterioration of mind

that was inevitable from the get-go  
finally finishes its course

in a prophecy:

the ghost of my dead mother  
eavesdropping as I sob willfully / woefully  
because I am so afraid to be alone  
that I bully everyone close to me  
into caring more about themselves  
than about the world

whose cruel test of faith  
is all of this?

\*

find yourself laying down  
the beautiful melancholy of language is tempting  
but you know already to turn away  
once in awhile  
and take a step in the opposite direction  
you know already to laugh  
after the tears  
but how?

with the redaction of knowing  
with all you will ever be  
a steady stone  
that enacts the performance of  
becoming  
becoming  
becoming  
and when Benny shifts on the floor  
breathes deeply  
that too  
is the gesture of an entire life  
endearing  
its ghosts  
still reaching  
still: the darkness of light

God  
when will we learn/unlearn it all?

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