

dreams

of oki sogumi



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spoilsport
&
violaceous euphoria

summer 2019

Cover by Oki Sogumi.
All typos are deliberate.

January 2008

agam

sorry i couldnt hang out with you, i'm leaving tomorrow morning bright and early for another step in the green card application and to catch a flight back north

and for another thing, i had this dream last night that i inadvertently caused your death! so i'm a little frightened to see you in case it happens. well what happened was you fell out of a tall building and i couldnt catch your hand in time. maybe if we just avoid tall buildings it'll be fine. as you were falling, you said "i don't want this" it is probably one of the saddest dreams i have ever had.

take care
oki

December 2009

had a dream about a group of students rebelling and reaching the border of their world, demanding that the screen (projecting an ocean horizon) be torn down, the adults consent, revealing the 3 post-apocalyptic worlds: 1) a desert without water 2) a world full of the annoying noise of the death of man 3) a prickling darkness

April 2011

I lived on the north / south Korea border between a wheat field and an airport. Farming equipment began to fall out of the sky, and then black shiny planes dropped bombs. I ran past the fields with my family until we were picked up by a huge evacuation bus. I began writing a short diary on post cards:

Day One: The bus is full of Christians and they are singing hymns. I am not participating. They refuse to speak about the crisis. I'm sure all the American kids teaching English are being evacuated out of the country. This is the beginning of a war, and I want to weep.

Day Two: No one will know if I am alive back in the States; they will worry and look for me on the internet. I want to reassure them, but I wouldn't know what to say. I am not safe and things will not be okay. I am making knots and trying to read *The Critique of Pure Reason*. But when I read it I am distracted by the thought of my failed relationships and impending deaths from the civil war. Fuck.

October 2011

huge rat trying to puncture my finger and suck blood from it, hatin' on people who like romantic poetry, my dream version of chinatown with a tiny lounge bar covered in faded red velvet and gold tasseled signs and chinese bakeries that hated the cops

December 2011

god i had such a fucked up dream about repression, getting rounded up by police, and put into some dungeon that was getting flooded, and weird humiliation things and psychological tests. and i was fighting with these two non-profit people who had helped id people and were looking at the whole thing smugly.

May 2012

i dreamed of ice cream

October 2012

i came back to the bay area for a surprise visit and ran into people at a grocery store when the power went out, and people hugged me till they knocked me over, and one friend was very excited and threw up into my mouth. LOL.

• • •

had a dream about teaching a class about racism and housing and capital accumulation with Chris Chen and it was awesome. then i had a crazy dream about having to choose between a boring corporate life and a hunger games style trek in the forest with a fake family unit (apparently we chose hunger games), and i found my way to the machine that kept us both locked in and somehow had the superpowers to destroy it, with some kind of magic steam (i am human carpet cleaner?)

November 2012

i woke up from a hilarious dream about going to an “American” grocery store in Korea and flipping out over kale. funny on several levels. i woke with a giant cockroach dying about a meter from my head, one of its legs was detached from its body. i woke up with a weird feeling and i think it is the poems i read last night that upset me. written by white people in korea teaching ESL

December 2012

last night i had a dream i was moving into a huge room in san francisco for 200 dollars, which is why even while dreaming i knew i was dreaming. i was planning to build giant bookcases and the previous tenant left because of loud gay sex in the parking lot below. one side of the room had a long narrow closet which i thought i should line with rhinestones and sleep in sometimes when i was sad and wanted to be inside a glittering cave.

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most of my dream last night took place in this really tacky church of a unitarian universalist strain, and when i woke up i was convinced these churches existed (everything covered in carpet, vases of reeds turning into arches, gilt louis XIV chairs, decoupage tables) it took me a good twenty minutes to realize that they're just a reoccurring motif in my dreams, not IRL.

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in my dream i was a poet and an amateur fortune teller
who drove a black racecar in a jacket studded
with the pins of failed states and the badges of dead cops
you were an experimental reality tv director
currently filming wild horses in their off time
edited to make them look drunk and anti social
dreamy 8mm footage of a pony sitting down
in a deep stream and pissing
we were falling in love by which i mean we were bitter
rivals, promiscuous, and writing anonymous bad reviews
of each other's work on the internet

• • •

on trial as a member of Pussy Riot,
but it was a different band / US version
one of us was already in jail
i was being accused

of beating up this punk dude
(it was true, it was for revenge)
of having a history of extreme violence
footage of me breaking things
but i won; the judge was a poet / painter
who i developed a crush on
he gave a lecture afterwards
by making these incredible drawings on a
chalkboard, asked to borrow my pencil
but was disappointed it wasn't a fancier one
pussy riot and friends snuck into a
buffet for library patrons to celebrate
and ate all this fairy food
paper thin star cookies
honey comb burritos
piled into a car with the band,
family, and poet crush
and my dad was driving and
tried to make a joke about Proust

• • •

breakup w/ a dream boyfriend who
is a total prick and real dumb
and happily console myself
by hooking up with a

series of beautiful and really cool women
in a castle where some kind of
art biennale is going on
i talk shit on some of the art
in a private rant to a lover, but someone
films it and the biennale ppl
decide i am an important art critic
but i roll with it because these
art ppl were a bunch of fascists
who were about to destroy
several of my friends' works
so i convince them not to
and we scam them out of
a shitload of money instead

• • •

dream about twitter
but twitter was attached to big messy binders
everything you tweeted had to be backed up by paperwork
so ppl would be tweeting things
like convo about books ppl read at occupy oakland
and then somehow i ended up looking at radio logs
from KDVS DJs who had books out
that ppl read at occupy oakland
including a funny one about radical parenting

that for some reason i thought anne boyer would like
but the guy was in shanghai
and i guess the book had to be directly ordered from him
or maybe i was trying to get him to send it to her for free
a bunch of scheming on how to get this book to anne
but then i was like maybe it is stupid to send her this book
like maybe it sucks and it would be insulting
the reviews for it talk about red diaper babies
and are written by white dudes in a way that sounds like
the book is for them a book of inside jokes
so by the end of dream i am like fuck this book
but i will mention it to anne
and reading omar's tweets
about how he often read two books per day
at occupy and i was amazed

January 2013

guys in my dream last night i had to fight nazi skinheads with a giant piece of bark. it was really hard.

May 2013

The people that I love are suns with strong orbits, pulling me in like sparkly ropes thrown into space. I am another crystal rock a heavy body i move through people trying not to punch through their guts. Praying i will not be cannibalized of my gem-like powers.

In my dreams people give water to these giant birds that looked like big black sleeping bags and when the water touches them, they unfurl into pelican-condors with iridescent dark feathers. In my dreams I peek into abandoned rooms trying to find a place to sleep, I am in the tannic interior of prunes looking for the quietest place that could hold me. We are in these rooms you are saying so much I don't understand and I wonder if I fall to pieces is it the rock is it the orbits is it the feathers the dream the water the something I know is inside you whatever words come to stake between us. I wonder what it is that will draw me back together.

June 2013

a dream about something called MILK BARN where people were forced to make experimental music in giant milk pouches

July 2013

there was a cake drenched in honey with cardamom cream and halved apricots like little harvest moons on top and I ate the whole thing.

• • •

I was in a sci fi reading group with reese witherspoon and the sci fi story I was writing was about prisons and in order to join the group I had to fill out immigration paperwork because the world I lived in was some kind of writer colony police state. Reese picked me up in her convertible and we went to the new monster inc movie late but I said it didn't matter because I could already predict the plot because the plot was always about the individual in capitalism "learning" how to be better at that.

August 2013

weird psychological warfare dream about my mother. in which petty antagonistic bullshit went on and on, and i became so tense about an “innocent” conversation about how i needed to buy better pans that i slammed down a glass bowl full of jam onto a table with one hand, that point at which speech is no longer possible, and then it slowly cracked, and slowly i watched the invisible micro shards now embedded in my hand show themselves as blooms of blood. and all i could do was stare at the broken things and not understand, then i woke up and felt like a frown was permanently creasing my face, & thinking it’s ok because that’s not really how things are any more between us, or maybe never quite were, at least i never made it visible in that way, but then thinking that this dream has something to do with having this sad and thoughtful and close conversation a lot recently about why friendship can break down and why and at what point, or why it can stay together when it is fucked up, and also just feeling this tension like all the time worrying about how to intervene, how to undo some fucked up thing, that recently while relaxing i’ve realized i’ll be gripping something too tight and have to slowly untense my hand, and know, it’s ok, this good moment isn’t going anywhere,

and somehow watching my hand begin to bleed into the jam, in this dream, seems to pull something out of my head that i hadn’t been able to think about or resolve before, or maybe it is just a reminder that the making visible does hurt you, and at the same time, is a kind of relief, and a realization that yeah you’ve been gripping on that way too long.

September 2013

i had terrible nightmares last night, maybe because the wounds from the multiple bike accidents are hurting me. in one i dreamed that one of my best friends here turned out to be an informant and in the aftermath all everyone could talk about was how they were surprised because this person had seemed very cultured. and I woke up basically in a fit of anxiety and fear. and i was paralyzed by sorrow and the burning in my shoulder. slowly i tried to tell myself none of this had happened, none of it was true, and that the intimate conversations and times we had were intact. i tried to remember to trust. but i was overwhelmed and went back to sleep. i dreamed that i was climbing to this library on a mountain, everyone went up the same stairs together to get there because there was a lone zombie that wandered around the other routes. I saw my grandmother and now deceased great grandmother, and as i waved to them thinking i would help them up, i saw they were being helped up by someone who i don't speak to in oakland, my grandmothers seemed sweet on him, so i had to turn away and climb by myself. finally after struggling with a bunch of other old Korean people dressed in white and grey hanbok, i got to the library that jutted out of this small mountain and looked out their huge window, out into— somewhere on the Korean peninsula? an unknown-to-me part of the Appalachians? the most beautiful corner of my dream world, swirling with fog and low clouds, the sweetest air amongst dark green trees, where your sadness can infinitely stretch out over the landscape that is generous and strong enough to withstand it

October 2013

someone wrapped me in a blanket and fed me pieces of meat with chopsticks. i felt like a sushi roll. i think i must not really be eating, i keep having dreams like that.

January 2014

Dream about a gathering to watch a show that was something between Downton Abbey and Girls but about a vaguely art / Left American bobo elite. But I kept having to leave the screening to go to a bathroom filled with blood. Inescapable blood and *scandal* and Bluebeard-esque guilt for stepping into where I did not belong.

February 2014

In my dream last night I wore a black chiffon negligee and said I wanted to see the Baltic Sea which glimmered on the map and i chased a teenager out of a party and had mixed feelings about it and someone told me I had very little money and it was true but I kept packing my bags for travel.

April 2014

i had a dream recently about reading a book, and i was living the book, and the book was my book. i was in prison-city, i went to the children's block, they told me Saṃsāra was the code to the city. i ran through the woods, full of old growth, i ran to the ruins of a previous city, called Saṃsāra, my task was to trace its paths, where the streets had been, discover not only its center, but all its supporting filaments. i was an anti-architect, a historian of ruin, a spy running for the children's contingent of the resistance.

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I guess I was hungry and took a nap; dream: I wandered from room to room of the unfinished apartment recurring in my dreams, there was a party, which was a different "orgy" in every room, which involved squirting various squeeze bottles of foodstuff— syrups, sauces, condiments, purees. I kept climbing out of the rooms, not having a dispenser of my own, peered at curiously for not having one, I climbed out of various skylight windows onto the roof. In the pepto-bismol & light broth sunset I tried to negotiate the dimensions for a new room above the existing apartment. For a moment imagining my new room, I was a boy looking at a video of my crush dancing on japanese tv, a close up of her bangs, swaying magically. I was a boy dreaming of finding the best bowl of Singapore style Chinese noodle soup, swimming in the promise of its fats and spices, breathing in the open air of the half broken half constructed city below.

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polyamorous detention facility where you had to make it work or else you lose your housing but the world outside was even more fucked, and it was also under complete surveillance and watched by everyone else in the facility, and the "elders" there in particular gave us advice and progress reports. I was leaving soon because I got into school somehow & maybe just transferring to another facility but my mother was visiting and telling me she needed to learn english so she could be understood at work and in the world outside of my dad. So I said yes, whatever that meant, I was going to find a way. It was fucked but everyone was acting really pleasant.

May 2014

Had a dream about riding megabus across the country and writing poems, while the guy who declared I was ignorant of science snored, oblivious of the landscapes flashing by, in the seat across from me. A dream within the dream: I was a lowly girl trying to capture the heart of a prince by photographing whales, his obsession. I was on a beach at night and a whale was rolling in with the black waves, and I was desperately trying to take a picture of its blowhole. A strange abstraction in the moonlight. Everything was tiny fragments of light on the surface of massive dark movements.

I also had some dreams about political terrorism but ill keep that to myself.

• • •

Watching *Divergent* last night gave me making out dreams straight out of middle school, when I used to dream of making out while being forced to stand in those endless lines arranged by last name, but we always managed to fuck up “the order.” But this time I was an adult, returning to school with my peers as a TA. An army of TAs / lovers. When it was my turn to stop making out and introduce myself I kept stumbling on my name, trying to explain my nickname, its relation to my given name. But everyone had gone and behind me a cavernous gauche art space / skatepark was opening filled with young volunteers, teeming with pos-y vitality which was suddenly nauseating. To make things worse, I kept remembering my lunch: on my way to the school I had dropped off a bunch of compostable waste to this new sanitation plant, they paid me \$17 and I watched all the noodles of my compost join the pool, then they said for \$2.50 they could make lunch of sanitized and resuscitated compostable material, so I ate a bowl of “compost noodles” which were ok, slightly muddled taste, bland, but I couldn’t forget what it was made of, and thought of it all day, throughout the make out lines and introductions and hideously muraled art space and watching the volunteers high five each other and trying tell people why my name was not “Oki Oak”

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eating last night’s salad, remembering the totally embarrassing dream i had about mfa programs (yeah, clearly already...)

transitioning smoothly from a highly choreographed gun battle with girls in tight black braids and red ribbons and white guns,

I’m on a roadtrip with a reluctant friend, who is annoyed that i am moving anywhere and hates all mfa programs, but whatever we’re also just hanging out,

maybe he just hates to leave all that choreography, anyway, he’s pouting,

i learn that i’ve just been accepted into “Pruitt,” a school outside Chicago, basically some dream version of Mills, but midwestern, with a name subconsciously stolen from Pruitt-Igoe but also resembling a certain school in New York, and vaguely an art school requiring a portfolio video (so, you see this is kind of about all the schools i decided not to go to),

I have no recollection of applying to Pruitt, but I’m excited and rearranging my future, to the great annoyance of my friend who looks like he is dying of a wasting disease by the time we get there,

the town is also called Pruitt, and full of houses built before 1915, big with narrow winding stairways, with maids quarters, and dilapidated exteriors, chipping white paint, floors made of old growth trees from another era, cloudy mirrors,

the sky is big and midwestern of my imagination, since i've never actually set foot there, let alone seen the sky,

it too was kind of pale and faded,

I'm excited to live in a large house, full of ghosts and echoes, and weird banging sounds, when the wind came out of that chipped sky and blew through the doors, i'm looking forward to walking down some kind of main street, unrevived, sort of crooked,

i would be near chicago! i think,

but then some things start to unravel, I can't tell if they've funded me, and i start looking at the program's website and portfolio videos of the other accepted students,

the program touts their strong family values, and how they maintain this sense of family by sending all workshop notes and works to everyone's immediate families, and all the videos are creepy mom-and-me montages, in one a young blonde woman is brushing her mother with a bouquet of wheat. Wheat.

I'm like oh hell no, and predictably, my mom is disappointed (dreams are not very subtle...)

and suddenly those "charming" houses and the crooked main street seem ominous, everyone looks the color of wheat, and doughy, they look drained of life, the houses resemble husks,

My friend who is now basically dead, with huge dark circles and half the size he was, is pissed that we went all the way to Chicago for this, and i'm like it's ok, I'm going to Philadelphia after all, and you will live, and everything is ok.

he's like duh, asshole, let's get on the road.

June 2014

my father was a contestant on a reality TV show, he said he wasn't going to win because the whole immigrant winning the American dream narrative is just a fantasy, but he does win, or I'm not sure if he wins but he has to walk down a long narrow pier made of glass high above the ocean, to a glass podium, and gets electrified with blue light. He's a mad scientist, I am a tiny child in red corduroy and ribbons, not sure what all the light is about. I walk away and become myself again, twist away from the pier and look into the turbulent sea below, dark, full of dark sparks. He follows and we both get absorbed by the sea instead, instead of being ourselves. Everyone I want to be with has been absorbed and surfaced as a spark in the primordial goo that churns and churns.

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I kept losing and / or dirtying my sneakers, every time they reappeared, they would be dirtier, and in places I didn't want to go, in the auditorium where some kind of model U.N. assembly was taking place and at the feet of someone I was desperately trying to avoid. Finally after a series of these encounters, I am unlocking my bike next to a lake, it's dusk rapidly approaching dark and the water is glowing bright sea greens and blues, I look away to stare at google maps on my phone to get home, an 8 minute bike ride it tells me but the directions are incredibly fucked up, roads i've never heard of, a series of suburban cul-de-sacs with horror movie names

July 2014

had a dream we lived under a new feudalism, and i was coming out to my dad about having “NO MORALITY” except i was writing “just the love for comrades” over and over in my notebook and he was so disappointed because he worked for the Prince and he was telling my brother those with no morals abandoned their loved ones in the field, and i kept writing in the notebook, i worked in the kitchen of the castle, baking sweet potatoes, always trying to come up with new sweet potato recipes, supposed to be thankful for not being the scullery maid, being near a fire all day i dreamed of fire, in my spare time i tried not to sleep, do drugs to not sleep, and kept trying to go to this techno club, rather like Berghain, which was a castle and hard to get into, weird unknown hours, i had visions of comrades falling off one of the castles engulfed in flames, unsure if i was supposed to save them, if it was a drugged delusion, or if they were immolating themselves as a statement

September 2014

dream where I inhabited both the sister and the brother (no one resembled me or my family members, at least physically)

Scene 1

We're at a restaurant, a German one, agonizing over what to order. I keep looking at the beer. My brother just graduated so I keep thinking we should just go for it though it seems expensive. We paid as we went, food, drinks. He has a wad of bills he is paying from, I pay too. At the end of the meal he reveals the wad is the last of his money. I look at how little is left and suddenly the weirdness of us at this restaurant, & a wave of sadness.

Scene 2

Sitting with our mother, sitting on the floor of a small cramped space, it's windowless. Bleak light from the kitchen. I have warned my brother about her, but he has ideas about nurturing mothers embedded in his head. Her body is narrow, bent. We reminisce about some happier time, once we walked through an alley glittering with clothes, bright pants on floating mannequins. Briefly she's incandescent, then flickers off. We have to go then, I am packing food for my brother— a giant dish of chicken wings, squid. Our mother begins to eat all the chicken wings, pale and soy sauced, the bones crunching in her mouth. In my mind I'm rearranging the dish so the gaps left by her eating her filled. We keep thinking she will stop. Brother looks on horrified, especially when she begins on the squid, and they seem to slip off the plate with no chewing at all.

Scene 3

Brother has been studying science, determined to distance himself from that chicken bone crunching, squid swallowing life. He's moved to a metropolis, found work. His apartment has heavy drapes, is almost devoid of light, and the light is very weak and grey. From these grey edges you can see Lego figurines all around. Little fortresses of color, like lacework.

November 2014

I was waking up early for school. It was dark like night (as it is now). I was carrying a plastic bag of cheap thawing meat. There was noise outside and I thought it must be a “meat riot”— today I would be prepared. But I had to use the bathroom first so I left the bag in the hall. The bathroom had no light but the stalls were essentially outside, facing the street. My door wouldn’t shut, I saw that the noise and the people out in the street was partially because there had been a brawl. As I shit, I watched as the women, now separated were still yelling. The one in a professional suit who was not hurt left before the ambulance came. The other woman went into the ambulance, and the crowd provided commentary, shaking their heads, saying don’t mess with ———. I shut the stall door. When I leave the bathroom it is light out and I have forgotten the bag of meat in the hall.

I walk down the street and run into some older hippies who give me some kind of fancy bread full of fancy honey. They are saying this was made by their friend, a chef, which they kept pronouncing “chief” who had mostly abandoned food to develop micobrews made of things like wild rice. The bread and honey is good, I am also eating a soft pudding from a glass with a spoon. The combination feels perverse. We are walking by what looks like a small fancy hotel, it is a house with a row of bedroom, the wall facing the street entirely open, shutters open, curtains fluttering. Pale bed linens on made beds, glowing. Isn’t that where he lives they say, about their “chief”— they say it is a commune, I think they must be very rich. At the end of the block is a restaurant, also open to the street, light glancing off the wine glasses, gentle wind ballooning the tablecloths, like skirts filling up. The effect is mesmerizing, soft, erotic even. I put my pudding cup down on one of the tables though it feels so wrong. A grey haired matron stares at me from further in the restaurant. I feel I have desecrated a sacred space. I’ve heard the place is run by a cult. I think about removing the dirty cup but there is nowhere to put it.

At school, I am in a class full of amazing queer feminist poets, and I am so tired. We have a warm up assignment to write a poem that we can send to some of our classmates if we want. I write some bullshit, but everyone is messaging me these amazing poems. I decide I will send them all a made up gmail address with a picture of the sky all bruised up. There is a reason for this, but even in the dream I’ve forgotten.

December 2014

Dream where I call someone a diva, she overheard and agrees and starts crying, I comfort her and she buys me an overpriced sandwich that is just a piece of bread. (At a hip bakery that also sold pink cheese and gold leaf pepperoni pizza— her whole performance of tears and agony had something to do with white guilt and she kept clenching and distorting her body like it hurt her to be in that bakery)

I go to the library where I have brought special rice that is somehow an archival text. I am washing the rice on the library floor, it is a lot and the archivists are concerned. I reassure them that this is all there is of this particular text, though I have smaller caches of rice, like broadsides and pamphlets. As I am washing, different plums and stonefruit fall off a book cart. I eat some. I realize that the fruit is there for ESL students to do their research, in case they've never felt the heft of a plum in the hand, or known how it smells, how it feels against the teeth.

March 2015

Excerpts from my dream the other night:

“There was a Buffalo tied to a tree that never moved”

“I was very aware of the heavy materials that made the buffalo”

“I was in Paris, but Paris was also Vietnam”

“I was reading Wikipedia which is why I knew what the buffalo was for”

“And the breeze would move his fur”

“But he never moved”

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Had a dream I was hired help and they only fed me bread. I was wearing a Butler outfit. And systematically eating bread with butter. Then these stickers appeared and said I would die and made me eat the bread with coconut oil and kimchi.

April 2015

A dream where you make out with so many friends. And you hold their hands. and make them cancel their other plans. And you make ravioli, watch them go from translucent to golden, and eat them for breakfast and eat it while touching their face. Just walking around the cities from friend to friend to friend.

Everyone else who was an asshole just might as well not have existed. You politely shrug and the friends all know about waiting for them to leave, gently pushing them out the door.

You forget to do basic things because of just being in love. You ride the bus and keep sliding the card but it's always the wrong way oops. And again and again but it doesn't matter.

When you haven't seen someone in forever, there is a kind of mutual pouncing, in the grass full of clovers and daisies, but the pounces are slightly off time so as to recognize the hesitation and then the affirmation in the other person. Like everything had to be a little off balance to be just right.

Waking up it feels like a nice transmission of affection, from everywhere I guess. it's sunny outside finally.

May 2015

Dream about escaping jail only to end up in the middle of a huge PEGIDA march about to start and being eyeballed by ppl but I had stolen a German flag so they let me pass, and then getting into a bar, where friends were discussing each others' "mental health pages" set up by parents since birth (and then maintained by self? Including testimonials from friends) and heckling the techbros yelling really loud just when they quieted to make a toast "The whole middle age Austrian dad look is really popular here!"

January 2016

creepy dream about my mother beating me, moving into my profs house to finish my thesis, and marxist theories on “miscellany” and movie trailers.

February 2016

a dream in which a person I dated a long time ago and do not like in the softest terrible voice tells zizek how he loves the diagram in one of zizek's books where the soul looks so relatively tiny. philadelphia is a body too in this diagram, it is bigger than the soul. the soul looks like a tiny dried up kidney.

in another scene, I dance in a wig I have borrowed, too large for my head. it flaps. my shirt is loose and flaps.

I dance in an exoskeleton I have baked myself. something is etched to its surfaces that helps me to dance.

it's 530 am, a million sirens woke me up, things are quiet now.

March 2016

finding a shoe resale store inside a complex that is combination City Hall and Chinatown, I find a pair of twenty dollar sneakers, junior sized but they fit perfectly, they have just the right size and color stripes, have a raised platform heel, zip up to look strangely like amazing Italian boots (this is what I think in the dream). The store is cash only and they add a “tax” of ten dollars to every pair. I have to run to the ATM, “save those shoes for me!” I plead, and they give me vague and complicated directions to the ATM— “go down the hall and turn into the garden, then go up to the higher garden and you’ll see an area, ATM area”

I do exactly that, I sort of know my way instinctually because so many of my dreams lately have been about navigating partially shut down mall complexes, that have especially tricky ways of getting between floors. This one is structured by deceptive ramps and simulated garden areas, but opens up to a wide open plaza above. I can’t tell if parts of the plaza are simulations. If I shift just the right way, I can see the ATMs to my left. But I keep running into my friends. I have made complicated hot pot dinner plans with them, many social things must be sorted out. I try to extricate myself, by being mysterious and trying to rush to the ATM. I tell some people about the shoe store, I keep babbling about zippers and the statement made with high heeled sneakers, and that the store is about to close and who knows when the combination city hall / chinatown will appear again. It might be the last day.

I finally get my cash and simultaneously resolve some social arrangements around dinner. I can’t remember my way back. Everything seems turned around after re-encountering the social. I must get back to finish my transaction! I reach the store, but the dream gives me no ending with the shoes, I keep looping on the moment of reaching the store while thinking about how to find the hotpot place in this complex.

April 2016

ugh i had a dream i made out with someone and then he reached in my mouth and pulled out all my fillings and dropped them in my hand and peaced.

June 2016

Dream about moon jellies as part of magical debt driven revenge and Juliana Spahr not liking men who banter on.

August 2016

what does it mean? I had a dream about a huge rat that was the size of a small dog with kind of wavy gray soft hair. It walked past me in the bathroom and gave me a reproachful look. It began roaming the hall and i was scared. I had two smaller speckled rats in my hands and threw them into the cabinet. I will deal with them later, I thought. First, what will we do about the gray rat? It was too big for a trap. People started to blame me for leaving a piece of wet bread out. The smell of the yeast drew in all the rats. I said, that can't be the only reason for all the rats or why this one is so big.

October 2016

I'm reading a book, dream advice from dream poet,

A version of "kill yr darlings":

"Go deep into the woods and burn yr bats"

Other image from the dream, was watching a documentary where Samuel Delany was walking through an ancient library of queer literature covered in lichen and beautiful mold that had bloomed for centuries and was like "the lichen and mold are also vital to this library" and the camera pans down to the wet stones and deep colors of this subterranean life and then tracking across the length of the crevices full of bound books tightly communed together and in the dream I was crying...

November 2016

Woke up to a deep anxiety gruesome dream about friends fighting and tearing my body apart in the process. Was it a sex party? Was one of them a secret nazi? Maybe all of the above. Then irl but virtually I bought a big rug, I guess to either 1) cushion my fall from one of these nightmares 2) roll up my body like a big sushi roll

Happy positive thoughts!

December 2016

Horrifying nightmare abt repeatedly being sexually assaulted weeping and jumping out of a car screaming help at ppl and running which bizarrely ended in being let into some older ppl's community speakeasy wine bar where I stared at the details of their weird but beautiful plaster decor grottoes full of stars and wobbly flowers and a patio full of feather leafed red branched trees that swooped under real stars and I held onto books in my hands not understanding the words but being comforted and trying to figure out how to call my friends but not wanting to tell them

Anyway fuck you subconscious

January 2017

It was an extremely hot day in January, I kept trying to change into a cute outfit to go out. Thought about writing fb status “random hot day in January: find someone to have sex with immediately!”

Rest of January: “haha I’m celibate”

All my clothes were beautiful silk dresses with weird coffee stains. It was really hard to take clothes off. Random ppl were in my closet. Parallel narrative— my friend this Japanese dude was desperate to make a demo tape for this hot January day. But everyone was using the closets. So he was recording in the upstairs bathtub. We listened to him. Another friend shook their head and said it was doomed.

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in fancy old hotel by the beach, with columns and carpets and palms inside. they have one pool facing ocean full of animals— ducks and baby seals play at my feet. As I stand on the edge looking at the animals, a snow white small owl flies onto my shoulder and nuzzles my neck while making happy sounds and shuddering its wings. It’s so fluffy. I try to take a picture and it flies away.

In a suite of the hotel facing ocean I’m fixing this cake that is huge and messed up. It’s covered in a pale ganache layer and there several random yellow objects scattered on the cake which I keep on there but try to arrange and clean around. I cut a sponge roll cake to arrange on top of some of the messed up parts. It ends up looking like bad art. I try to take a picture but it’s dark.

I guess I’m getting married but it seems like I’ve been kidnapped for a while. This guy is very unstable and killed a few ppl on the roof who were there for the wedding. The witnesses and the priest. I’m with my friend who is maybe also me, in the get away car with the murderer. She narrates the story of the murder from the backseat but as if it’s a joke. This reveals that we know what happened. Her joking manner almost seems to work but eventually he is really pissed and starts swerving the car. In later scenes I’m alone with him.

I go with him through a complicated series of elevators once until he leaves me but heads to the men’s psychology section team at uniqlo. When he disappears seemingly for good I don’t know what to do. I try to find my way up the elevators again. I get caught by security. But then I just ask the way to the men dept at uniqlo and they send me there.

All the ppl working on research in men’s dept seem to be women and speaking Cantonese and are old friends. In one rm that I enter they seem to be testing a snack product. One white woman step out and says she will conduct my interview. She reminds me of Lena Dunham and interrogates me about my life and interests, tho she clearly looks at me like I’m pathetic and boring. I feel weirdly insecure or like I can’t remember anything about my life. I tell her I like the ocean and like to cook Korean food. She says she hates Korean food because she hates garlic. I way too obviously roll my eyes at this and this pisses her off. I can see through her like she’s an instagram stream. I can see her answers to these qs as a series of perfectly lit photos. She asks me if I have a best friend. I struggle to answer but thinking of all friends somehow brings me back to myself and I remember the owl I saw and how I wanted to tell Wendy about meeting an owl. “Wendy” I say, “she’s really cool.”

February 2017

Lol i had such a stressful dream about boundary setting with a person i dont talk to now. And it happened in a car to and at an anarchist space which itself was super stressful. At some point i was so frustrated at the person's behavior of dramatically weeping on my best friend that i started yelling "i behave normally! I dont do this to your friends!"

Then i witnessed this bullshit in the anarchist space where this dude who looked like an alt right nerd came in and "explained" his freakout the day before when he smashed a bunch of glass vases onto the floor in a rage and was writhing in the glass and threatening people while yelling all kinds of slurs. He was taking some kind of "experimental antidepressant" and had taken too much or too little and then he demonstrated the swerve of chemicals in his brain that weren't quite reaching the place that would make him act like a decent person. Incredulous, i watched all these ppl in the space believe this and agree he was still allowed in the space even though they looked scared.

I turned to the person who had cried on my friend and said fuck you, you are like this person, always given permission to hurt other people but still feel victim to some group conspiracy drawn out of thin air.

I laid out my boundaries of how i did not want to process or talk or continue to be approached. I felt guilty as hell because it felt "mean" even though i knew i needed this. I also felt disgust but tried to not let that enter my voice too much. I didnt want to be poisoned by this.

On my way out i stared at the grotesque ceramics on display in the strangely fancy first floor lobby. The queer anarchist femmes tumbled out the elevator looking beautiful and laughing and we stole some bougie lady's shoes and left some shoe donations in their place.

I was still prickling with doubts but the sky was lovely and huge and that saved me. We all piled back into the car to go on with our day.

Then i woke up very frustrated i had done all this work but only in a dream!

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Strange pregnancy dream

Cleaning bats with shopvac out of a hallway of fancy old Parisian apt bldg where famous novelist lived, they get sucked in and disappear

Feeling rapid fetal heartbeat thru my skin whose drum seemed too small

Accidentally drinking whisky

"Maybe it's a rat"

Wondering how I could take care of child and not wanting to be with the bb daddy

Girl begs me to let her into the novelist's building, I stare into the space next to her one hand on the heartbeat and say "it's not what you think it is, there's a lot of bats"

May 2017

Fuck I had an incredible dream about writing a story about children eating poisonous mushrooms and in the dream I thought this must be a story that already exists but just in case write it down

But then it was obliterated by a stupid ex bf dream wherein I had to hunt his online identity because of some death thing

Ugh.

• • •

Dream of riots in Philly last night. The sky pouring fire and smoke. I was crying or my face was wet.

All the shitty chic radicals were at a party with Zizek and some D-list celebs.

On the street and ppl yelling at me to go inside.

Stores covering up but there's also crashing, crackling sounds coming from everywhere of window glass falling to the ground.

I woke up and it was like 85 degrees and a dog was panting.

June 2017

Baby season. I had a dream last night that my mother was pregnant with two babies— one in her and another in an autonomous flesh balloon I carried under my arm while listening to the deep bass heartbeat w a stethoscope. They were fourth months late and waiting to be born in gemini season.

• • •

Tonight, i woke up from anxiety dreams about buying a bread dough mixer and making so much bread that I forgot to make several transportation connections. Many of my dreams lately have been about trains and full of crane shots of train depot complexes that from faraway look like tangled thread and boxes.

July 2017

My anxiety dreams are getting weird, like naked women on motorcycles with chainsaws trying to kill me weird

I think part of what made me feel bad was clearly I wished to be on their team but in the dream I was scared I must've done something really wrong in life & just kept saying

“They are really crazy!”

I think it turned out I was being accused of stealing a used book

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Notes on several dreams I had I found on my phone ??? :

Canadian poc kid named chris moves to US. Plays hockey. Glides and scrapes ice against opponent— this is called blue gliding / hanging

Date bunch of ppl including a poly couple... tinder prom king on a boat photo shoot... But not wanting to go home w friend

Giant vases falling in loft apt. Earthquake. Wondering how to avoid landlord. Homeless friends sleeping in upper hallways. Rm mate Is surprised

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I had a dream where I talked to Steven Yeun— except he also looked like Jo Jung-suk— for therapy reasons (instead of crawling through a tiny wooden “therapy tunnel”) and I really wanted to fangirl for a moment and be like I really enjoyed yr movie and talk to him about weird korean american things but we just chilled and I stared at the face painting of a target on his left cheek in the shape of North America

August 2017

I was a short story about a beautiful woman covered in blood sitting in the middle of an empty desert road, she is picked up by her lover they go inside, he swallows her whole, slowly like a boa constrictor but the image that comes to mind is like sliding a piece of paper through an envelope cut at both ends

• • •

In my dream last night I knew everything about Sylvia plath like I was her dressmaker... “she moved beautifully in clothes, even a rag”

I watched a movie which splits into various plot lines of reality depending on the waking state of the mother

I was in an interminable grocery store with lines that looked like hours so I stole some peaches for my mother so we could make Dutch babys in the skillet aisle w fresh peaches

• • •

I worked for a division of whole foods corp that ran a bus company (had bought out an existing one)

It was one of those “millennial friendly” offices where they let you dress weirdly (my coworker, a writer friend i recognized had other ppl parade around me in mini fashion show) and there was an optional seminar on “cool loans” over craft beers

I overheard the boss talk to her assistant about which workers drunk on craft beer she was trying to sleep with

It was my first day and we had to go to a meeting in a really filthy building that was abandoned and open this vault (you had to insert a whimsical variety of coins into a slot and then they rolled on a tiny neon lit track) to go to the meeting space which was about “customer incontinence on bus trips”

October 2017

I was hanging w Justin Bieber and he kept having these panic attack spells that were really serious and maybe also epileptic and he would pass out but then his unconscious left his body and disappeared into the TV or some other screen-based stream of consciousness and dreams and narratives. I could see that he was reliving a memory or dream about his dad telling him to visit one of the Hanson brothers for a mythical mentorship. The Hanson brother could walk on water and threw a gold coin at Justin Bieber, which was supposed to give him power and change everything.

We had to get ready for him to come to, which meant turning the volume off on TV, making it grayscale. & airlifting in boxes and boxes of cute cats and kittens. As he was coming to some visiting friends came by with presents. Very nice ecstasy wrapped in gold foil and pink bubble wrap so it looked like an ice cream cone. JB came to and joined us in talking about drug packaging. He said he was sad everyone thought he was a snitch and talked about how he did two years in some v minimum security prison for rich kids that sounded like a bad summer camp. Then we started excessively making out (Ew... But dream me was into it)— apparently we were dating. Kittens were everywhere. Some of the kittens were called “everything bagels” and smelled like onions.

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The mind meld of the couple is gross and I love grossness, squishing. This thing happened to me last time I was on shrooms where I was seeing things from my partners pov and then would suddenly return to my abandoned body which, feeling safe I had left behind rolling in pleasure, & the return to the body, to myself, was hilarious. And now I’m stuck with this feeling that it is very hilarious. And love is a delight.

Then there’s the fear that someone who can make you happy is 1) powerful 2) partially you via projection. That in either case the lonely way of returning to the abandoned body rather than the hilarious way will be your way again.

I had a dream last night that we were making out and moving through streets and corridors this way, great distances without seeing, but somehow totally efficient at moving through while also completely absorbed. We are also holding large whiskey glasses in our hands the whole time of this dance. Then suddenly spotting a fancy bar, he breaks away from the embrace and enraged at this monstrosity, tries to break its windows, throws and smashes the whiskey glass, tries to rip apart this place. His sudden rage both scares me and yet i agree with it. I’m unraveled from my reverie but this seems to be an extension of it, the destruction of property. But I’m frozen, unable to enact my rage or access it so readily. I feel a tiny finger of resentment or annoyance at myself. I lose sight, the staff are calling security so I’m trying to slip away. A waiter takes my whiskey glass. Outside, I realize we are near a large municipal building with huge pillars and extended stairway leading down to a large lawn where tons of people are gathering for a protest. I’m relieved for the cover that the number of people will give me. I wonder if I should go back but tell myself it’s better we don’t both get arrested. Then I realize, mingling in the crowd and becoming anonymous, that he has my backpack with my id, money, keys.

November 2017

I watched a film about loss. I watched pine pollen, thick and yellow, drift and be carried by wind. When I woke up I thought “I made that film” & that pollen and all its gold is with me.

February 2018

I had a dream about a very physical cathartic memorial made of giant heart shaped rocks and builders stuck onto a side of pointy man made hill tufted w grasses the stones were embedded into the flesh of the hill so the nubs of the ♥s stuck out and you had to grip the hill with your body, turning around its whole circumference by grasping at the nubs as hand holds, sometimes easy and grippy, other times small and too smooth, & as you round the bend of this conical burred being, there's a fountain with beautiful mosaic glinting in the smoggy sun— MM— “memory of mud.”

August 2018

i had a dream i was writing a poem that went something like this:

“Green strawberry, black cherry

“China, Iceland”

and then kissing someone on a stairwell while still thinking about why i was writing that poem

September 2018

Well I had very detailed nightmares about being an hr late to the naturalization test and running through street markets and through Chinese restaurants then the qs (clearly made up by my subconscious) were ones that required me to finish sentences about bats twisted up in a net of roses or poop sold by Buzzfeed in the latest trendy patterns.

• • •

I was a (plus sized) model hand-whisking this liquid foundation (color: peach) in a little bowl but it oxidized to this lapis blue color and filled with what looked like noodles. I splash some of the blue wet pigment onto my hand where there is a tattoo of an old church / carnival. Memories emerge of when I used to be a squirrel / tourist and hung out at the church / carnival which was dilapidated but still popular enough that teenagers doing car tours around the city stuck their heads out of cars to snap pictures of it. I get compliments on how the pigment looks with the tattoo. I start doing someone's makeup and then notice my boyfriend on the couch with tears in his eyes, I kiss the tears and he says he will see me tomorrow morning. I worry. I kiss him too long and the other models are like *cough*. He leaves. At the same time I realize I have no foundation on and there is some kind of meeting of the models about the upcoming runway show, we will be photographed and I was supposed to find my peach foundation. I run around several room looking, each with identical products but arranged very differently. All out of my shade. I run back into the room, no one cares. We start to discuss which version of a popular "live meme" (Karl Marx's face drawn onto one's face) we want to be for Halloween. I decide I want Marx's face slightly below— Marx eyes below my eyes etc. The lapis liquid seems to have erased part of my hand, which makes me feel fractured and I have trouble picturing the future as the meeting continues.

October 2018

I've been having a lot of weird paralysis nightmares lately which hasn't happened for a long time (the old recurring one was being in a car and then my dad who was driving would fall out, and I would have to drive, which i did fine at first and then suddenly I would be frozen forgetting how to do it and meanwhile the wheel spinning and veering the car wildly away from the road...)

recently it's something or someone cute and lovable, but purposefully or accidentally hurting me in a way i cant move, and their power is immense, i fear for my life. last night it was a leopard but with sloth like long arms that would hang onto your neck but with huge claws. and the process of attaching to you would pummel you with great violence, so yr left bruised and bleeding. in the dream, ive managed to hurl the creature off me a few times but now it hates me and its sparkly eyes wont stop staring, and walking around with this thing around my neck, with dripping wounds on my head, face, neck, and very very slowly, going around to people I know who are at my grandparents house for a party. I look into everyone's eyes, pleading silently, trying not to enrage the creature. I look at my grandmother, my friends, etc. No one seems to get it, they all laugh, and exclaim how cute it is, how weird I am, wondering how i got so "dirty" and that i mustve had fun scuffling with the adorable leopard sloth. I'm convinced i'm going to be killed in front of everyone and that they will think it is a loving embrace.

December 2018

I was making dinner w comrades (who were people from disparate parts of my life as well as made up dream characters) in honor of K who was being kicked out of the country back to London, after finishing a dissertation (an irl person I don't like much, but in the dream, we were unabashedly on fine terms). The meal was elaborate, and I was sort of playing sous chef— at some point almost wept because T, hungry, strolled into the kitchen and decided the bone broth should have cream in it and started pouring it in. K had gone through a whole string of legal processes, and this dinner was planned after the lawyers were like this-is-it. When the dinner finally started, mainly because D had started drinking too much and we were facing the threat of alcohol running out before the food was out and all the lagging guests had arrived— K started telling us about how the whole process had kicked off.

K had to be interviewed by a Bank of America online chat AI, which was similar to when banks ask you to review odd purchases. They went through all of his travel records based on his spending in each area and maybe phone location services.

K said initially the chat bot opened with,

Hi I'm Bank of America for National Security and here's something I did recently: Built the largest prison in the US.

They went through his two-day stay in Maine, trips to California, a few months in New York which K explained was when he rehearsed and performed in a Laurie Anderson opera (the costume and set design looked like illustrations made by working with fine grains of black and silver sand to create detailed and dramatic chiaroscuro effect, or someone extremely skilled with an etch-a-sketch).

When they got to a recent trip to London, the bot referred to a protest there in response to some US entities' arrival (maybe Trump but also some military leadership), and said "in which American political leaders were met with weapons" and showed an affiliate link to a unicorn shaped toilet paper cannon. K responded, I think thrown by the unicorn shaped toilet paper cannon, something like— "I'm not sure if *that* was what drew them back away from the streets of London, surely there's not enough toilet paper in the world. But ha, if so, it couldn't have happened to more deserving people."

Anyway, either this response and / or being in the Laurie Anderson opera (in the dream someone mentioned that she is on some list of the state, dream LA had some radical affiliations / long organized with an anti-apartheid pro-Palestinian group) got K flagged and then dragged through the ringer of paperwork and then finally we were here.