

LARY TIMEWELL / offshore

2:46 p.m., 3/11

Understand as fast as you can. 'Nothing'
is coming

like an anagram of *no time to think of death*
much less

the euphemistic window of poetry;

the inverted image trembling on the opposite wall tells you
local trees are rooted to
hidden lands

this is a nightmare postcard to a waking
self

an unforeseen that erases itself & all
in its path, a dissonance

in a distant window,
seen through your own bright plasma

the revery was
an instant long ago had not yet
happened

■

soil samples, isotopes,
Fukushima apples, La France pears

*If plutonium is eaten it is easily excreted, but if
inhaled & stays in the lungs it may cause cancer.*

When the concentration of radio active iodine-131 in reactor #2

rockets from 1,000 to 10 million times “the norm” in a single day it all becomes surreal, incomprehensible.

The Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency added, however, that there was “no health risk, as the radioactive substances will substantially disperse and be diluted by the sea.”

awabi, sauri, maguro, akamachi, kochi, fugu, sawara, hirame, buri, sumiika, kohada, sayori, hamo, masaba, amabi, shako, sazae, hotate, kazunoko, ikura, uni,

VERSUS

iodine-131
cesium-137
barium-140
lanthanum-140
& tellurium-132
plutonium-238,
-239,
-240

everything is under
control

fuel rods melt to
coordinated joint efforts, while

TEPCO heroes slosh in boots of
contaminated water, sleep on chairs,
eat grim cookies & juice for breakfast

containment..... is a vessel
a fire that rode the harbor, even into the night

As of 3 p.m. Tues., March 29th, National Police Agency:
Killed..... 11,082

Missing.....	16,717
Injured.....	2,778
Buildings damaged or destroyed.....	148,710

one minute home, a place for cat
to stretch in the sun; another, a
school gymnasium on dry ground,
a sea of surgical masks

& happy for it

3:22 p.m., 3/11

Norikichi Ichikawa, 41, & his mother, are pressed by rising water to ceiling of their home, spare inches to breathe; they remain trapped there for two full days.

39 year old Yuko Ono's minivan is lifted two stories to land in a tree; she & son Kento, 8, manage somehow to clamber out, escape to higher ground.

Firefighter Junnosuke Oikawa, 56, is swept 5 kilometers out to sea in the tsunami backwash: "I thought I had died many times."

The boat of fisherman Yoshinori Yamazaki, 62, is brutally capsized; underwater, he seeks for sunlight, the upright orientation, reaching air.

Norie Kanno, 86, is singing *karaoke* at the Riverside Nursing Home in Kesennuma, when a wave lifts her out of her wheelchair & deposits her on a floating wooden table; 50 of her companions die.

Babu, a 12 year old *shi-tsu* dog, senses danger, leads Tami Akanuma, 83, of Miyako, Iwate-ken, up a hill, thus saving her life.

JET teacher, Taylor Anderson, 24, of Chesterton County, Vermont is swept away forever as she cycles home after the initial earthquake that terrified her kids' class in Ishinomaki hits.

Takata Hospital administrator Shigeru Yokozawa, 60, looks out a window to see a 10 meter high wave coming straight at him, runs to save a “lifeline” satellite phone before he is swallowed by the seawater that rises to the 4th floor.

Akira Abe, 57, & her grandson Jun, 16, are trapped under the freezing wreckage of what was once their home in Ishinomaki; they survive 9 days eating dessert-packs of yoghurt, & are rescued.

A woman wakes from a nap in a Shizugawa hospital, Minami- Sanrikucho...

A kindergarten girl rides the bus home from Hiyori Yochien, peaks into her *bento* box-lunch to retrieve a *sembe* cracker she has saved for later...

A boy daydreams of outer space, of flight, staring at a row of Ultraman figures on his bedroom bookshelf...

A mother...

A grandfather...

A girl...

A boy...

A woman...

A...

■

in the crisis shelter

the blankets all smell of Bravas hair tonic;

down but not out in penultimate town,

joy costs less than this misery, this

annoying *factotum* deferral to celebrate

place, people together, people

not so much sleep as *undergo* sleep

& whatever hands intertwine

appear to ripple, to quake less now;

stay awake until the dream ends,
sleep
until the world wakes up, eight-fold
an omelet, add light
soy
sauce.

Clipped occasion with plastic tablecloths,
blue vinyl sheets, Anpanman
towels & Pikachu blankets,
the adrenalin
of escape dressed in
the fatigues of survival;
life is tedious, intermittently momentous;
the language for it is in debris,
but the sound is among us
still.

■

Looking up at the old inarticulate moon,
down to the timetables in the mud;
concentrating less on the television
of what we are
exquisite / incapable /
human

escape

At Yahiko Shrine the raindrops are opaque, an invisible display. No one is so anthropomorphic as to think Nature is apologizing for the moment past. That is to say, any one of us born. There is this world & there is the cessation of suffering, even under shifting fault-line that obliterates time. A veil of birds passing is once again an abstraction forming on the forehead.

The ghosts were torn from the buildings; the apparatus of moonlight unlocked. There are no words for counting the days. Behind door #3, the hell-wraith of mental & material streams, but here in Niigata my nearest neighbor is the weather. The mountain appears a particle deluge, the rain constructed amorously of retinal seraphs.

My wife & son are safe in Tokyo. CNN is on anabolic steroids; the static the frayed experience raises cilia-hairs on the forearms of hope. Habitué flock to convenience stores reciting nuclear eclogues formed in the precise matrices of chrysanthemums painted on the side of a wall.

Language tastes better with the tang of *wasabi*, the cool of *daikon*. That kid with a diamond-encrusted tricycle is sunlight itself. The ululating somnambulistic of media dissipates like an involuntary communion along the auditory canal. Woolly moon through fog forms fissures on sheets, on ceiling.

■

the unsought for fortune &
other stray dogs
approaching snowstorm means
to know cold
flower like a pressure gauge
heart, an effort
to see in such borrowed

moonlight
distance rolls out as edges
glow
outward from
epicenter
between visits to the finite
world
maps are coming to their
senses
8 inches west
but
meaning can never
go home

aftermath

plate tectonics & thalamic receptors, the earthquake
as experienced from the newsroom, 'casters
in white hard hats... as if...
again?

end
over end, in
a profusion of torque

post-earthquake, kids naturally shift back into whatever pleasure
they can glean in the present moment, are then sucked back into
the vortex of terror by the recurring aftershocks

newly-minted humans wrapped in
cotton haze, 61 babies

born in the makeshift
hospital in Ishinomaki

rolling power.....outage

Yamazaki Baking Company can't produce bread or bake the
670,000 school books destroyed

douji tahatsu terro

comes home, our

multiple simultaneous malaise

SDF distributes water, the clear source from Inawahshiro,
even as the reactors are being flooded with seawater

daily life becomes

2.4 millisieverts

of naturally occurring radiation

the black night is porous with stars
that eddy, magnify, withdraw

& the sea is the dumb
sea once more

the handwritten
rupture, the

vertebrae of your body re-devote themselves to
that stability

This is true, but unimportant; this false
but vital.

Burning duration of the cold fuel
of debris that was once, is again,
a community;

events as seen
through more events.

The adroit
the inept
the mortal:

I'll take the everyday
any day

detritus (or, critical will)

Futons plump with seawater like monosyllabic stones, broken roof tiles, a Crayon Shin-chan scrapbook, a bundle of *Jump* magazines, a framed Tokyo Tower jigsaw puzzle (intact), shards of *chawan* & *udon* bowls, televisions & Gameboys, half a high school uniform, the entire saturated panoply, a whole straining for partials, the remains of even the possibility of a slow conduit of human happiness. From within the chromatic whorl, take a backward glance at the waking world, the blunt citation of disaster. Emulsions fall from sky in milky blotters of sleep. Some of my limbs are already in the afterlife, intervals of memory stolen by a phantom adversary called *shoganai*. Mr. Itoh re-opens his *yaki-tori* shop, Ms. Nakamura her unlikely flamenco school. Local *cento* offers baths for 250 yen: half-price, triple the customers. High schools hold graduation ceremonies in evacuee centers; evidence everywhere of human heart, its constant & variable name. Wake to *radio taiso*, attend to authentic living; grim causality is just another transience multiplying the conditional, shifting the null point of inertia to action.

advancing, dosimeters in hand

the crisis has a road map, it is
compensation by autumn

officially

victims of state policy
in a righteous limbo of

liquefaction

■

*Given recent events we hope visitors will please refrain
from throwing cherry blossom-viewing parties.*

spiritual survival is no
indulgence, no rural shame

Farmers will refrain from grazing cattle on the radioactive grass,
will

purchase *forage* or
forage for food, as

the scurry of mnemonic mice flits eyes across
the Yomiuri Shimibun, semantic
fits

& starts an obvious
in medius res mass of

restlessness, a piecemeal debris motif.
Surely, Buddha didn't

travel

60 light years
just to blanket

a sinkhole. *Cold*
shutdown is a tone employed

as loss when dark roofs
in recurring dreams sail by

the starfish in the
sky, eyes once

wide in accurate alarm

close on the decay, pin-hole
at available angles.

Is this the shadow-mass or a new
design for living? asks

Mr. Kimura, taking a bath
in *Kitamura No Yu*,

shrinking the intervals

of the figurative
wrenching surrounds the day

looking forward to
sea eel season in June,

aboard the Miki Maru #5,

& rice in the fields the year after
the year after

next

March 30, 2011
Koriyama, Fukushima