Sink

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Cover Image by Soh-yon Park
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I stand
still

It's a rare occasion to stand still
I stand still and my shoes come off my feet
I am so still
So still
that I begin to form architecture

I become suddenly aware of my human footprint
I cannot stand still without leaving an imprint

I stand
still

and I
sink
sink
sink
into the depths of the soil
begin to architect a body of work
as I watch the Land
make space for my imprint

I
sink
sink
sink
deeper still
into the depths of the soil
and I begin to listen

I hold back breath
suddenly aware of my reliance on the air around me
suddenly aware of its integration of me

I
sink
sink
sink
deeper still
into the depths of the soil
and I feel my toenails
only scratching the surface
of what I notice is a beaten landscape
bruised by footprints
bent by manipulation
burned by oversight

the soil feels soft
tender with vulnerability
yet resilient

I
sink
sink
sink
deeper still
into the depths of the soil
and my feet begin to heat
as a residual tempest bubbles
beneath
the weight of me

A fury beneath the soil produces steam

I become suddenly aware that I am sinking
into the depths of Mother Earth
into the depths of her soil
where my voice subsides

I am swallowed
absorbed
I become part of her tempest

I
sink
sink
sink
deeper still
into the depths of her soil
and I become suddenly aware that I am a lake
that there is water beneath my own skin
that I have stored anger beneath my own skin
that the lake beneath me is a resource
I have abused too

I become suddenly aware of how many words
I have spoken
of all the waterfalls of speech I have forced
without considering consequence
without thinking of how many places
I have flooded
with greed

I have forced a waterfall of speech
out of a body of water
that has become
so dry

I have unknowingly made a desert
out of my own skin

I
sink
sink
sink
deeper still
into the depths of her soil
and I feel a sudden thirst

as if recognizing my dehydration for the first time

as I finally stop speaking
as I finally stop making noise
over every other body of water
as I finally sink into the tenderness
of her soil
her soil where there is now an imprint
the shape of my body

Mother Earth has architected herself around me
and I become part of her

I
sink
sink
sink
deeper still
into the depths of her soil
and in the silence
in the held back breath
in the dried out space
beneath my skin
I am finally able to listen to her
out of necessity
out of thirst
I listen to her

your footprint carries a weight
your footprint carries a weight so heavy
your footprint carries a weight

what I see
what I know
what wealth of history I preserve
is of no interest to you

your footprint carries a weight
your footprint carries a weight so heavy
your footprint carries a weight

tell me
Earth-dweller
how to remain still
when your stomping
drives me to madness?

I listen listen
can’t stop listening to her

your footprint carries a weight
your footprint carries a weight so heavy
your footprint carries a weight

She grumbles
moans
as I
sink
sink
sink
deeper still
into the depths of her soil
losing form
into the cracks between her tectonic plates
shifting
reshaping my understanding of geology
Above me
lightning ignites
recharges
reinvents electricity
in an attempt to neutralize
to make peace with us
to make peace between her Land
her Sky and us
Trees fall
the ground shakes
roots uproot
She riots

She riots violently with rage

your footprint carries a weight
your footprint carries a weight so heavy
your footprint carries a weight

how far will you walk
Earth-dweller
before you reroute the trail
of your footprints?

I am a lake
created to absorb
the wisdom of trees
how they reach not only with their branches
but with their roots to one another

I am a lake
created to absorb
the song of the morning dew
how it drips with renewal
inviting new breath

I am a lake
created to absorb
the stories that ignite the sky
to look up
and to hear her tell me
stories of who I am

I
sink
sink
sink
deeper still
into the depths of her soil
and I hear her sudden invitation
to be architected
by her Story
written and rooted
across an expanse that reaches from East to West

I stand still
and listen
sinking
into the depths of Mother Earth

your footprint carries a weight
your footprint carries a weight so heavy
your footprint carries a weight

When
dear Earth-dweller
will you allow
me
to architect
you?