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Three Poems

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Three Poems

slice the surface of the day, find a day inside containing all the other days already formed, ready to swell, fan their gills, fume and deliquesce. dig in, uncover a day deep within a day within a day, poised to retreat from the threat of desiccation, draw in its moon-shaped operculum, shut its trap door against the world. listen, there is a day inside the day clasping an egg sac of tiny days to its breast. pull your glasses off and squint, see the day inside the day to be examined, to be magnified, a day inside the day peppered with traces of ancient days pricked into its hardened sediment. sit back, rub your neck, follow a flicker from your peripheral vision to a day within the day with a mirrored powder room filled with days gesturing towards infinity, adjusting their ties and their make-up, or rub your eyes, pinch the bridge of your nose, is there just one day, and the rest are reflections

I.

question: if I sliced the connective tissue holding the letters together, severing word from meaning. if I sliced this tissue very thin, with a scalpel, took a fine paring, added a drop of something that stained, like worry, like regret, if I clasped the stained word shavings between thumb and slide and cover slip, if I lit them from below, if I magnified these fibres of meaning would I see the cells, striations, granulated surfaces? if I carefully cut vowels from consonants, if I cultured consonants in agar, allowing microbial contamination, if these consonants daughtered, doubled, grew bacterial ligatures, rounded forms cushioning their barbs, unfamiliar chains of sound filamenting starch?

II.

the daughters announce themselves with a musical tinkle like currents collecting and folding the skin of ice winter night forms on the harbour

the daughters use words that no longer sound like words but like thin hot sheets of metal cooling or the tones birthed from tones when faucet and vacuum are both running

the daughters emit sound from many pores, overlapping wavelets rippling in similar directions with a certain insistence, an unhurried urgency resembling the rising tide

the daughters punctuate their new speech with hexagonal crystalline silences, pauses elaborate as snowflakes, feathered but hard

time: something we move through that moves through us.
its accretion defines our forms, which define its accretion.
its real measure: the body, any body, animal or plant,
sentience gauging *moment* as unnumbered
snowflake nows, as heaped heartbeats, shed leaves
and shells, bone or bark sloughed cell by cell. a lacquered,
lustrous surface, transparent instants seeping down,
losing their edges in glazy depths, curing as they merge.

BASMA KAVANAGH is a poet, visual artist, and letterpress printer who lives and works in Nova Scotia, in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. She produces artist's books under the imprint Rabbit Square Books. She has published two collections of poetry, *Distillō* (Gaspereau, 2012), and *Niche* (Frontenac, 2015), which won the 2016 Lansdowne Prize for Poetry. Her poem "Coda," about a world after humans, was a finalist for the 2014 CBC/Canada Writes Poetry Contest.