

The scream is how they both happen. The world is interiorized, in its horror, in its beauty, in its banality, to be released as a scream. And so the interior is also made exterior — in an ejaculation, an excretion. The body is full of wastes and desires and prophecies.

A small child jumps up and down on a bed and cries. Her father is leaving for yet another trip; he is packing his suitcase. She is trying to stop what she knows is happening with the entirety of her body, the entirety of her will.

Prophecy, in the simplest sense, is merely the knowledge of what is to come, received in a flash of bodily, primal insight. It's a plague; it's a promise.

The scream is not a failure of articulation; it is the urgency of communication embodied. The internal emergency of knowing you must make yourself understood, all the while being resigned to the impossibility of making yourself known. Faced with insurmountable, painful solidity, I reach for a scream, like a sharp turn, or a dream, or a drug, to grasp for an alternative.

The scream is what follows the collapse of everyday attempts of exteriorizing the interior. Circular arguments from the mouth to the throat to the orgasm to the gut to the anus to the breath only lead back inside the self.

There are signs and symbols and ciphers in fallen trees, demolished buildings, coffee shops, fires, roadkill, and traffic jams. Everything is a harbinger. This is a kind of delirium. But screams are an alarm signal. The adrenaline rises and vision clears. Hysteria, a woman's illness. When bodily certainty is anathema to progress, it's Cassandra's scream.

It's been injected into my bodily knowledge that the female voice is a disturbance. The primal scream, the scream of pleasure, the scream of horror, arouse fear. Here, a raised heartbeat, here, a light film of sweat. The guilty succumbing to pressure and flow and release. Screaming is an attack. Screaming is a cleanse.

*Futakuchi-onna* is a Japanese demon. Her long hair hides a second mouth on the back of her head, which consumes everything the woman should not, says everything the woman should not. She is unrelenting, unfiltered in the ingurgitation of her evil, endless needs. The demon mouth is for screaming.

I remind myself to stretch my mouth open as wide as possible and push from the diaphragm up to the disturbingly vulnerable tissue of my passageways and enunciate and project from my own little mucus membranes. At times I forget that I have not yet adapted the blinking of my eyes into a legible code, that my psychic events still need more direct transmission than their somatic translations. Insight, prophecy, hysteria, desires are the holes torn through rationale; screaming is a violent grasp at the other side.

Screaming is not belligerent; it is to touch, to take up space. It's a weapon; it's a plea. Screaming rips into the fabrics of irreconcilable realities so that we might be offered a reprieve where the torn parts meet.

- Ana Iwataki