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Westerly acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as First Australians. We celebrate the continuous living cultures of Indigenous people and their vital contributions within Australian society.

Westerly's office, at the University of Western Australia, is located on Whadjak Noongar land. We recognise the Noongar people as the spiritual and cultural custodians of this land.

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This project has also been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

62.2

**New Writing from
Western Australia**
Fiction
Poetry
Interview
Essay

Westerly

All academic work published in *Westerly* is peer-reviewed.

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むかしの人にとては、顔の美貌が大きな問題だったそうだ
少なくともひとつは首についている顔ごときが、どうして問題だったのか
まるで夢物語のようだ
明日は月曜日で、首問題は未解決である
こうしてぼくも「人間としておもしろく」なっていくらしい

Original poem, '専用' was published in '地上で起きた出来事はぜんぶここ
からみている', 2017.

Into White Darkness

Misaki Takako

Tr. Subhash Jaireth and Rina Kikuchi

Misaki Takako was born in Chiba Prefecture, Japan, in 1967. She started writing in her late teens, taught by Yoshihara Sachiko (1932-2002), a feminist poet who ran a famous feminist poetry journal, *La Mer*. Misaki was awarded the *La Mer New Poet's Award* (1990), and published her first collection, *Kannō Kensashitsu (Sensual Examination Room, 1991)*. Her third collection, *Sakura byōin shūhen (Around Sakura Hospital)*, won the prestigious Takami Jun Poetry Prize. Her fourth collection, *Shizukani, kowareteiru niwa (Silently Decaying Garden, 2011)* was awarded the Ono-city Poetry Prize.

Barely dark is barely light
all that was visible has turned invisible
and the invisible has come to light
there however deep it is we should go
exhausted carrying the weight
of nothing but our own bodies dragged alongside

Of sorrow the white shroud
of pain the white shroud
stretched across the whole field
nothing more to lose
now all is white and more
white and yet strange darkness

Neither eyes nor hands know the way
in the still darkness
only the heart has its work
we sort as if beans from the gravel
stumble count our stumbles
slowly so slowly

We pray we grieve
we stand next to each other
but alone heads lowered bodies curled
and hands stretched out looking for
other hands to rescue to hold
to farewell to mourn and remember

We exhale we cry
warming the white darkness with breath and tears
as if daubing it with colours
dropped from the paintbrush
and making it glow like embers around us
as we wait still silent becalmed

Subhash Jaireth, now Canberra based, was born in Khanna and spent nine years in Moscow between 1969 and 1978 before returning to India. He has published three collections of poetry and four books of fiction and non-fiction in Hindi, Russian and English. His book of poetic prose pieces *Incantations* (Recent Work Press), was released in September 2016.

白い闇のほうへ

うすくらがりは うすあかるみ
仄見えていたものが 見えなくなり
見えなかつたものが 仄見えてくる
そこへ どこまでも 入っていけばいい
ぐつたりとした 自分の重さを
たたつひとつの 持ち物のように ひきずつて

かなしみの 白い布は
くるしみの 白い布は
一面にひろげられてあるだろう
これ以上 失えないほど 失って
そのあと なにもかもが 白く
白く そして 暗く

目も 手も おぼつかない
しづかな闇のなかで
できるのは こころの仕事
砂利と 豆を たんねんによりわけるように
つまずきを つまずきながらかぞえるように
ゆっくりと ゆっくりと

祈るとき 悼むとき わたくしたち
ひとりずつ立ち それぞれの
もっとも深いところへ向けて うつむく
片方の手は もう片方の手を
あるいは どこかにあるはずの
見知らぬ 熱い手を 求める

吐かれた息 流された涙が
白い闇を あたためる
ほつほつと 筆の先の色がにじむように
小さな炎は点され
やがて まじりあって 大きくかがやく
そのときまで そこに とどまつていればいい

Original poem, '白い闇のほうへ' was first published in '飛びたたせなかつたほうの蝶々', 2015.