

At the end of the world

After Matthew Zapruder

Everything is dead except you & I

so let's sit down together
somewhere along the edges
where we can dangle our feet into the matrix.

Let me show you
this brown coat that I bought
one day when I wanted

to feel something more than
just this body. So many things
can be true at once

and yet none of it at all.
I wanted to be something more
so I became a writer.

I became a writer and wrote
a sentence and made it true.
What else is there to say?

Dear reader, if you stand
by the post I might just miss you.
But here, have this gift

of time we have together.
And here, have everything else
in this poem too.

I said I am a writer
but what I mean is I am a daughter: a
testimony of my mother

in case she forgets.
This poem is an archive
where memories are kept.

Somewhere on the west coast
she is humming a song
while washing the dog

and it is the most tender sight.
Sometimes when you turn the music down
you can hear it a little clearer.

Some days I am only an echo
a sound bouncing off of something else
unable to hold on long enough to build a self.

Dear reader, I came
to poetry because I
wanted the truth

but found instead
a soft terrain to lay
my body down on.

If a line is a moment in time
then a whole poem
is a timeline

and so how many alternate
timelines have been
written into existence?

I throw my body into open water
and somewhere else it is monsoon season
on the island where we spent our summers

our breath heavy with the scent
of durian we ate off of newspapers. And then
again, somewhere else:

my feet pedalling a broken yellow bicycle.
A blue sun beating down on my neck.
Ghosts running wild through a wasteland in reversal.

Now a bit closer to home:
a body, dancing. Strobe lights
turning the singular into plural.

Dear reader, I want to know if it's possible
to live a life outside of
the violence that comes with

having your life be written by somebody else.

What is it they say
about the end of the world?

Only that it begins again the next morning.

On Earth I was given clay and a self
and told to smooth it into something whole and presentable.
I looked through the telescope and saw

nothing except a needle point of light
coming towards me.

It opened around me and at the end

A door.