

Ash

Masaya Saito

Clean shaven
Walking on
Through the long
Wasted village

Coming from far away

My finger
Touches a snail's horn

Astray from the path
Still further

A butterfly net

From there on

That path
Straight to the brink

Clean shaven
Walking on
Through the long
Wasted village

Coming from far away
My finger
Touches a snail's horn

Astray from the path
Still further
A butterfly net

From there on
That path
Straight to the brink

Through the tunnel
My parasol
Remains closed

A parasol
Or so it seemed
Up there
On the brink

Fireflies flitting
Not enough
To call them a swarm

The sound of the water
Flowing even lower
Than my pillow

An empty plate
Smashing it

Autumn clearer

New the blue
Sky a kite
New the circle

Falling from a dawn
Cloud, I regret—
My new bright bandage

Crossed:
My arms
Mirrored in the water

Through the tunnel

My parasol

Remains closed

A parasol

Or so it seemed

Up there

On the brink

New the blue

Sky a kite

New the circle

Fireflies flitting

Not enough

To call them a swarm

Flowing and falling

Flowing and falling

Flowing and falling

An empty plate
Smashing it

Autumn clearer

A cold sunset
And on the cliff--me
Without wings

Crossed:
My arms
Mirrored in the water

Noise, Winter
As I breathe
A time you know I
Long and jet-black

Darkness—
Still deeper into it
I drag
A block of ice
A cold sunset
And on the cliff—me
Without wings

Withered field
And again
The fire engine crosses it—
On the way back

Winter
And against it
I comb out my hair
Long and jet—black

Noise,
As I break off
A bare twig

Darkness—
Still deeper into it
I drag
A block of ice

Withered field
And again
The fire engine crosses it—
On the way back

Trying to stay
Upright in a breeze—
A balloon

The ancient border—
Crossing it
—With a balloon

Bare trees
And through them
A balloon wanders
—so red

Getting colder
A dead silence
Sober as death
Iceicles

Waterless river—
I am walking
On the bank

A cough—
I surely exist

Vying for length
In silence—
Iceicles

A balloon bursting,
Silence
It continues

Breaking off an icicle,
To stab it
Into snow

Trying to stay
Upright in a breeze—
A balloon

Getting colder
I too
Am shaped

The ancient border—
Crossing it
With a balloon

A balloon bursting,
Silence
It continues

Bare trees
And through them
A balloon wanders
—so red

I
A dead silence,
So they grow—
Icicles

A cough—
I surely exist

Vying for length
In silence—
Icicles

Far off
Yet to be seen
Breaking off an icicle,
To stab it
Into snow

Drawn on the spring
Earth a dense
Vulva

A cough—
I surely exist

Vying for length
In silence—
Icicles

Breaking off an icicle,
To stab it
Into snow

Far off
Yet to be seen
Gravestones are standing

Drawn on the spring
Earth a dense
Vulva

Far off
Yet to be seen
Gravestones are standing

The last poem on the fourth page is a version of a Japanese haiku by Santoka, the poem on the eighth page and the middle poem on the eleventh page are versions of haiku by Saito Saito.

Masaya Saito was born in Akita prefecture on the North West Coast of the island of Honshu. He has traveled extensively in the U.S. and lived in New York and Los Angeles. Ash is his first collection.

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The last poem on the fourth page is a version of a Japanese haiku by Sontoka, the poem on the eighth page and the middle poem on the eleventh page are versions of haiku by Sanki Saito.

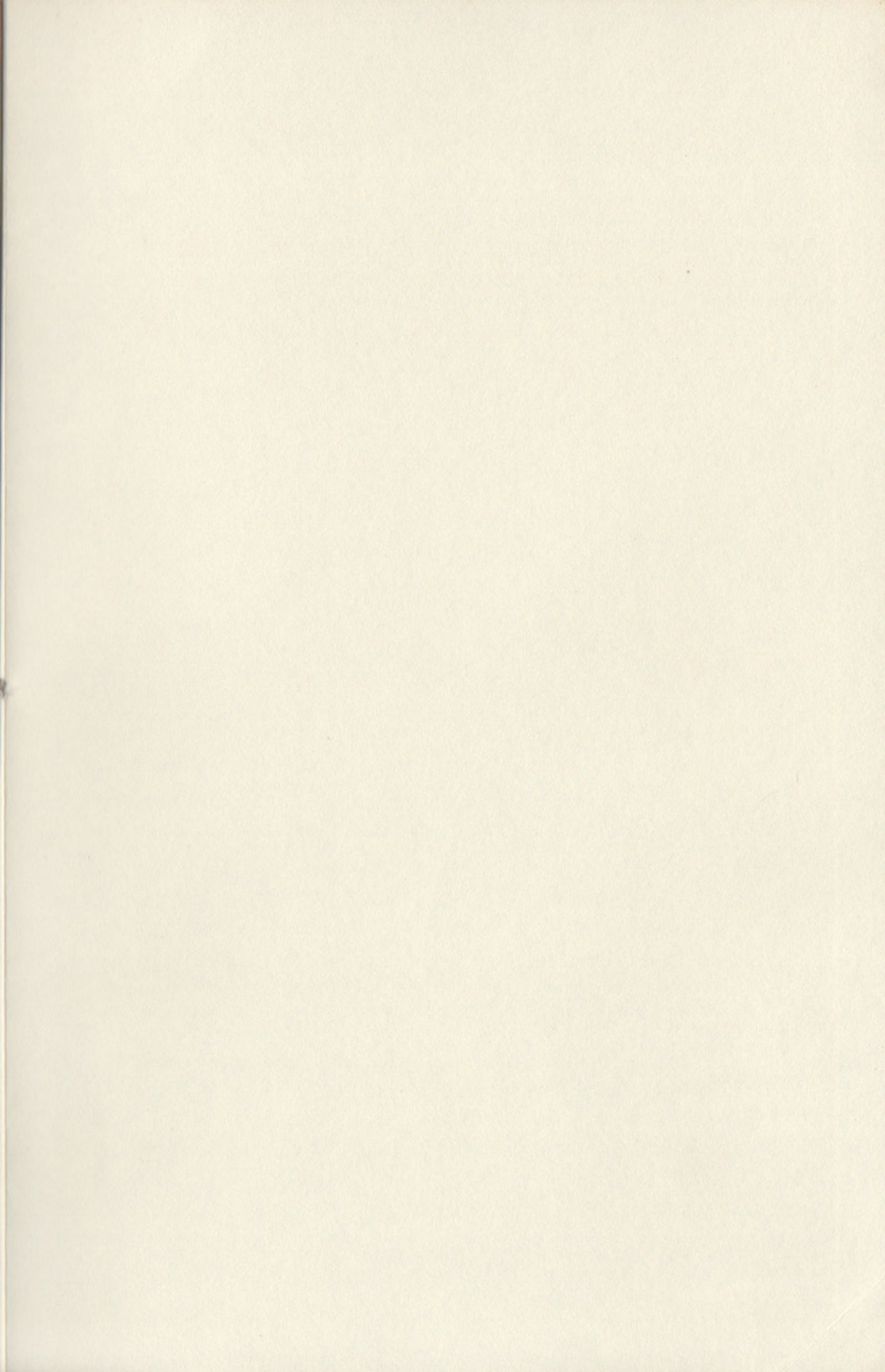
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