

# Victoria Chang

## Marfa, Texas

Today I tried to open the river. But when I pulled, the whole river disappeared. I used to think that language came from the body.

Now I know it is in that group of mountains in the field beyond the fence. Yesterday, I saw a red-tailed hawk. When I went near it, it took

the wind with it. I was left without air. But I could still breathe. I realized everything around me I could do without. I could hear the

mountains but nothing else. I saw a car start up but I heard nothing. A gray-haired woman said *hello* to me but I heard nothing. I stood and

watched the hawk. It never looked at me but knew I was there. Neither of us moved. Finally, it flew to the top of an electric pole.

I realized the pole is all the years of my life, the mountains applause, the hawk, what I have been trying to tell myself.

# Marfa, Texas

Here, there are grasses rolled  
into dry moons, then carted  
off on trailers to the edge of  
the rain. Here, there is so  
much sky that even birds

get lost. Oh to be loved the  
way the day loves the night.  
See how slowly they separate?  
All day long the trees move,  
each leaf in a

different direction, as if by  
the work of fingers on a body.  
How many times our bodies  
imagined by another mind.  
How many times the day

imagined the night. Once I  
loved a man so much that  
when he didn't love me back,  
I closed my eyes and drank a  
whole bottle of night.

How I felt night rush into my  
body, then out through my  
skin as envelopes. At the time,  
I only felt pain but years later,  
all I remember is joy,

the kind of love that seems  
grinded off of a moon.  
Perhaps such love cannot  
ever be returned, just returned  
in the imagination.

# Marfa, Texas

Today, I saw art objects left  
over by people who are dead.  
They have forgotten us. Do  
they know they have forgotten  
us?

Or are they actually watching  
us? Once my heart sat inside  
the bell. It rang only when  
something touched it. Lately  
every

shadow is my dead mother.  
Lately the bell rings all the  
time but the bell is empty.  
Lately I have forgotten how to  
love the surface.

I only love the drowning. Do  
you see how beautiful they  
are? Those people without  
shoulders? Without  
hesitations? Is it

possible to stop loving  
everything? The owl. The  
hawk. Every person I meet. To  
see everyone as my mother. To  
have a heart

like this is to be made of  
midnight. There are always  
too many questions to answer.  
To love so much is to live  
within birds.

I have been waiting for  
this heart to fade or at  
least to kneel. Maybe the  
heart is not inside me but I  
am inside it.