

The grandfather by Linda Ravenswood

West Hollywood, 2020

with

Excerpts from Claudia Rankine's Citizen, 2014

(a hybrid text transcript of the performance poem)

Mine kind mine kindt I gotta say hello to mine kindt mine kindt she comin in the house mine kindt aaaaaaaah wait I got to turn off murder, she wrote ahhh so what's it going to be oioiusch you're lookin good my little motek how are you my sweetie ahhhh heheeeheeehee what'd you do so sit ye sit ye sit ye so set your sights Claudia Rankin Rankin Claudia Rankine citizen citizen what is this citizen what is this a burned rugalach citizen citizen what is it a watch you know the sears company you know the sears n roebuck they started out making and delivering watches did you even know that see I still got something to teach ye citizen Citizen citizen a American lyric what is that a burnt rugula oh it's maybe fabric did i tell you I was a schmatte cutter did you know that's how we made money that's how I bought our first house your grandmother and me I cut hundreds of yards a day that's how come you got it so good heehee citizen citizen wait a minute i gotte get my glasses wait a minute

if they don't see happiness in the picture at least they'll see the black

what the hell the black is it some kind of sci-fi what do you mean you only wish it was what is that even supposed to mean don't get too smart don't forget I'm the one who taught you how to read in the first place in the first place heeeheeee always bringin me things mine kindt

when you are alone and too tired even to turn on any of your devices

oh it's like a new piece of writing

usually you let your self linger in the past stacked among your pillows usually you are nested nestled under blankets and the house is empty

oh that's luxury

sometimes the moon is missing and beyond the windows the low gray ceiling seems approachable it's dark light

why did you bring this!?

it's dark light dims in degrees depending on the density of clouds and you fall back into that which gets reconstructed as a metaphor The route is often associative you smell good you are 12 attending Saint Philip and James school White Plains Rd.

oh this is goyim!

and the girl sitting in seat behind excuse to lean to the right during exams so she could copy what you written out so it's Goin To sister Evelyn

ysee I told you

is in the habit

do you see what she did there sister Evelyn is in the habit sister Evelyn is in the habit
oh you don't know what's funny

of taping the 100s and the failing grades to the coat closet doors

oh that smarts punitive

you never really speak except for the time she makes her request and later when she tells you you smell good and have features more like a white person it was so she

thinks she is thanking you for letting her cheat and feels better cheating from an almost white person

what is this you're making me read

I can hear the even breathing that creates passages to dreams and yes, I want to interrupt to tell him i us you me I don't know how to and what doesn't have an ending tell me a story he says wrapping his arms around me yesterday I begin I was waiting in the car for time to pass a woman pulled in and started to park her car racing mind our eyes met and what passed past as quickly as the look away she backed up and parked on the other side of the lot I could have followed her to worry my question but I had to go I was expected on courts I grabbed my racket the sunrise is slow and cloudy dragging the light in but barely did you win he asks it wasn't a match I say it was a lesson

its photographs in the back its like mermaids and fishes it looks it looks like days of tribulation when the sky is almost wrecked by weather but you know it's got to pass it's got to get better soon you know wind will come to clean the landscape of fire and wailing no this looks like it's the detail of that like the way the sidewalks Down in South LA look outside my school sometimes I always think it's mean landlords who just evict people and put all their belongings on the sidewalks I always think that when I see that it looks like it feels after a carnival or a football game do you know what I mean when the whole Parkway is loaded up with peoples belongings all turned over like a levee breaking that's what this detail looks like but it's of the ocean of everything turned up from the ocean and right there like a nightmare you see a human leg with a chain on it a broken chain lifting up like piercing through the muck becoming a bird and a fish it's horrifying

you take in things you don't want all the time the second you hear or see some ordinary moments all its intended targets all the meanings behind The retreating seconds as far as you're not able to see come into focus hold up did you just hear did you just say did you just see did you just do that then the voice in your head silently

tells you to take your foot off your throat because just getting along lawn shouldn't be an ambition

it's a hood it's the hood of a jacket or a sweatshirt I made those your grandmother made those if it was 40 years ago that could even be one that we made