Chamber music

lo wie in a chair.

She rolls a dice in a glass container and opens a book.

xxxx xxx xxx xxxx xxxx xxx[1]

She repeats.

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It was 11:30 pm, in Beijing.

I sat on the floor of a stadium not far away from the International Airport. Listened to her dice clinking the glass over and over and the same sentence read in the same cadence by her in the same chair, under a floor lamp. Sometimes, she looked up.

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[1] I learned later the Korean lo wie read meant, “Chamber music shortens one’s life, outdoor music prolongs life.”

At that time, I didn’t know I had already been in love. [23456]

[2] The next day, I attended lo wie's "htmnp" ("how to meet a new park") workshop. The park is always there. Summer has already begun. The poem has already been written. The future is in the past. So there is no music. Only the realization that the music has already happened. [3]

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[3] At the 2024 You and Me Festival, Li Song and Zhu Wenbo performed as a duo called "No Performance." They asked us—if we'd like—to hand them our phone for a second. Some walked up to them. Some observed in the back. Some walked up to the people who had gone up to them. I saw the free motion of people. The festival took place at a table tennis club in the inner suburb of Beijing which as of today has been torn down. The crowd moved, rippling; we met, brushing past each other. What Li Song and Zhu Wenbo did was simply typing out an oscillator website, letting each of our phone emit a frequency.

A visual and audio sea. [4]

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[4] Twenty minutes later, lo wie stood up. She picked up the chair, walked into the crowd. She sat down, repeating the ritual. I was struck—not by her move, but how organically people began to walk, standing up or sitting down at new spots, approaching her, or lying down, or stepping away to a more spacious area. We acted out of own desires and no one thought of leaving.

Just then, it poured. [5]

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[5] The next day in the workshop, lo wie revisited what she read and decided the pouring rain had turned the indoor music into an outdoor one and hence, her statement based on the dichotomy was no longer valid. [6]



(where is lo wie?)

Face to face, eyes to eyes
Physically I am

opposite
you; while our minds

are side by side
or back to back. Cuz I

see thru you. I see
thru

& across you like a ship into a foggy—
Like weeds

“breaking
up through the [7]—

Like “I
wasn’t moving

anywhere
on my feet [8]—

if music could speak

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[7] Jean Valentine

[8] Lyn Hejinian