

## Megan Kaminski

Classified

alien: not having arrived on  
one's own, having been  
transported beyond one's  
natural range (see: non-native.  
see: un-natural.)

we arrived late at night  
Alaska Air departed from Seattle  
by way of Minneapolis by way of Kansas City  
mai tais and macadamia nut cookies were served  
by flight attendants in polyester aloha shirts

invasive: having spread  
oneself in a way that is  
detrimental to those who  
are native (see: strangle-hold.  
see: snare-trap.)

beach access is limited across the island  
mansions and hotels spread along coasts  
guidebooks promise access to the 30+ sacred pools

we enjoyed lunch of fresh-caught fish  
we drank wine imported from Italy  
we admired the ocean from our table en plein air  
we took pictures of each other under palm trees

endemic: belonging to or  
native to a particular place,  
a state of being unique  
(see: koa filtering sun  
to tree ferns.)

hao koa `ohi`a pokalala `ahinahina loulu  
`akia halapepe hinahina ewa `iliahi koki`o`ula

we brush our shoes removing traces of wheat seed  
we walk carefully through Waikamoi Preserve  
under sick pine trees until the trail opens into valley  
water trickles over lava flow the valley filled green  
upon green sheltering bird song enveloping in green  
scent  
we breathe in filling ourselves with plant moisture  
exhale warmed by our bodies our cells joining the valley

koki`o ke`oke`o mamaki ma`o hau hele nanu  
`i`iwi `apapane `amakihi `akohekohe nēnē pueo

mass extinction: a  
widespread and rapid decrease  
in the amount of life  
(see: people. see: goats and pigs.  
see: layer upon layer of bone.)

the things we carry with us composing  
our selves our memories our ventures out from houses  
we seal out the world or bring it in  
we leave traces whether we wish to or not  
alien dna filtering through forest  
trees cleared for fields animals grazing  
we watch and wonder reading the 3000 feet  
eroded from the mountain top reading the rising sea  
we write this on paper on our skin onto our bones  
we carry with us this place and that place  
misplaced and remembered imperfectly  
etched into memory imprinted into tissue

adaptive radiation: a spreading  
outward, a diversification  
(see: a move to an  
unoccupied region.  
see: mass extinction.)

from "Natura"

And when day arrived I found most cars  
bobbing white amongst waves paint buffed soft  
night candy foaming from lips whipped I washed  
my mouth devoured sweetness milling beside  
tongue soap-salted squeaky dry filmed dry  
drawing misplaced scattered in the wake  
beat against the reef-rocked break only a kiss  
only voices in morning missed keys and Blackberries  
floating in the bay catching not on branches  
rather on sky and I rolled eastward  
bended breathe into over places fields turned  
brown from frost trees cleared to stumps taken  
tabletop starling swarm gray squirrels overly-tall  
men striding uphill silvered my voice descended  
whispered evergreen shrub gasped crisped brown leaf  
roof-tops sugared blue pick-ups riding horizons lake-ward  
marsh-driven crusted reeds frozen grass ducks oily-coated  
feathering three-o'clock golden wash unto arms  
and I watched it all pop across  
expanses of water and sky and far-off bush  
blackbird scatter filling bleached winter branch  
empty promise of buds in December sedans padding  
asphalt pot-holed desaturated afternoons bleed  
hours never early never late blue spilling dank  
blue children downed in jackets in footprints wood-fenced  
horse and cow pastured dreaming never knowing daylight  
just drifting until pink afterbirth on water on lips

Megan Kaminski's first book of poetry is *Desiring Map* (Coconut Books, 2012), and she is the author of seven chapbooks. Her poems and essays have appeared in *The Atlantic*, *American Letters & Commentary*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Third Coast*, and other journals. Her second book *Deep City* (forthcoming, Coconut Books 2015) explores the body and the city as architectures in crisis. She teaches creative writing and literature at the University of Kansas and curates the Taproom Poetry Series in downtown Lawrence.