HIGH UP IN Unit 7763, each night slid in like an oil spill, filling the hours with sludge and shine until it seeped into another day. Bo was carrying on a long solitude here, stranded in the studio apartment she rented, one island among hundreds in this building, in a city inundated by rain, so saturated it could be called drowned.

The rain had kept on for seven years. It slowed some days but never stopped. Overnight, it seemed, the city had transformed into a rainforest. Vines that ran from roof to ground sucked up the water and sent out shoots and tendrils. The skyline brightened from gunmetal to green, softening the sharp edges. A steward on Tamalpais, she imagined, must have seen the sudden verdant thumb of land to the south, dividing sea and bay. Below, streets transformed into rivers, and the rivers blew out windows, tore doors from their frames, widened into buildings through the new openings. The water took down statues and leveled groves, carried entire families away. People fled or drowned—or moved to higher ground, where they relearned how to live in the city they'd known as home, a place the rain had claimed.

Today the quiet was punctured by ringing. Her cousin Jenson had chartered a boat, in part for her overdue evacuation, and it was scheduled to depart in two weeks. He'd been calling at least daily from British Columbia with reminders: the boat would leave at noon sharp; she should bring only the essentials; anything else could be replaced up north. She listened until he was done recording his message.

Everyone she knew had left by now, gone to Greenland or Siberia or Maine—inland, north, overseas, wherever there was an opportunity. In their messages, they asked, with the patronizing concern of the secure, how she was doing, if their family homes were still standing, when she might move or at least try to visit. They sent birth announcements and exhibition announcements, video footage of cities that had risen in just a few short years, the occasional rumor of looming water wars where they lived. Mostly they avoided mention of the refugee camps that now lined the routes of migration that had emerged following mass displacement, the river towns engulfed by monsoons, the unprecedented temperatures that had evaporated reservoirs, fried vegetation, and filled the morgues. Bo was embarrassed not to share their urgency to leave. They implored her to find a better, safer place, and she assured them she was making plans, tried to see what they saw, but couldn't.

An electric hum pitched down and a moment later the power went out. Silence. With both hands, she lifted her preferred plate from a shelf and set it on the counter noiselessly. The swells of uncertainty paused as she pulled a few dry nubs from the mycelium wall in her kitchen and arranged an ascetic meal on the cobalt-glazed ceramic. The flowers on the trim contrasted with any food: the mushrooms, a potato, a broccoli stalk, or a halved egg, wreathed in blue. She chewed and swallowed. Then, with absolute care, as if handling glass, she washed and dried the dish and returned it to its place. A tarry feeling returned, starting low, in her legs, and as it filled her she felt soothed by its familiarity, like molten night pulling her to the floor.

When the sky began to darken, she forced herself up to the roof. The last two years, her twice-weekly trips to the market had been tiny anchors to the world. Life was going on outside. She'd make herself walk the aisles, trying to appreciate feeling, not just hearing, the rain. And she'd buy food—even without much appetite, she had to eat.

The rooftop economy had emerged in densely populated sectors as the flooding had worsened. Nimble street vendors were the

first to move their operations up, followed by small businesses with storefronts. Together they pushed the city to expedite relocation permits and build bridges to replace the wrecked roads.

It didn't take long for everything else to follow them up. The school district cordoned off areas for recess and after-school programs. The parks department put on movie nights. Talks, concerts, and community meetings took place under the shelter of portable bandshells. But even then, there was a sense that it wouldn't last. Activity had diminished steadily, as expected, especially in the last two years, and only a third of the vendors remained now. Still, everyone left moved along the roofs, by necessity and for pleasure, for groceries and exercise and socializing, and to get from one place to another.

By habit Bo made her way to the citrus stand, past commemorative murals and cairns, her arm shielding her face from the drops. Her favorite vendor stacked his table with glowing glass jars, a wall of sun against the gray sky. An illusion of bounty. When his greenhouse lemons ripened, he preserved them in salt and oil. He sold them throughout the year, but she rarely bought any; mostly she just came to look.

"Slice some up if you have a pigeon to roast," he'd suggested on her first visit, "or nibble on a sliver if you're craving something sharp." He talked just the right amount, as though sensing correctly that she was unaccustomed to people. Today he said nothing when he saw her but pointed at a basket of finger limes labeled HELP YOURSELF. She chose one and nodded in thanks. She pushed herself to continue and bought several bundles of spinach from the next table over. It wasn't much, but she could stretch it across a few meals before it went bad, delaying her next errand. As she made her way back to the elevator, she estimated she wouldn't have to leave her apartment again for three days.

In the vestibule, she did her ritual scan of the bulletin board, noting any new flyers of the missing and checking for the laminated photo of her mother she had posted two years earlier, just after the big storm. Plain lined face, easy smile, gray pixie cut—it was still there.