

## **Nesting**

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One thing about teaching is that I find myself engaging with language in new ways, enjoying intimacies I hadn't previously known. I have to act everything out, so it becomes imprinted in my body: how large is the same as big, but different from small. I have to articulate subtleties that I hadn't previously named...Today someone asked me "What's the difference between hope and wish?" What IS the difference? Wish is less grounded, less likely. Well then, when do you say wish, when hope, and when do you say dream? I try to answer well, but there is a poem in all this. In my morning class, acting out "she gave the cookies to ME and I gave the cookies to HIM". Object pronouns. A song, if you will, if you know how to listen. I refuse to turn on the air conditioner and we laugh and get bored and fan ourselves. I get cranky, they flirt with each other incorrigibly, I try again to engage them, to win their understanding, to create that click. There is a poem in that too, like there is a poem in the lungs expanding and contracting with each breath.

It's hot hot hot and my condo complex smells like perfume all over from the different flowers and trees and leaves. A bunch of pathway lights are burnt out and the heat has driven people outside of their pretty apartments, to sit on their steps and smoke, like real people, talk in different languages, wander around in the night air with their children. Windows splayed open set free smells of food I don't know how to cook and the babble of languages I can't speak or understand. They waft along the perfumed heat of azahares and jasmine. It's finally starting to feel like a place I can call home. Maybe I will sit on the grass tomorrow and shell peas for soup, take off my school clothes, put on a summer top and act like I really live here.

I am running every day - five minutes, or ten, which is five or ten more minutes than I ran last month, or for that matter, for the last couple of years. I run, stretch, walk, meditate, run, sprint, stretch, walk, race home, take a shower, and go to night class. My body loves it, feels so grateful, asks for more and a little more. I listen to her, run not for the sake of running, but in a running meditation instead, each footfall planting a flower on the earth, each gasp of hot summer air a poem.

