

The translated instruction manual for loving

Read instruction carefully and then begin to do.¹

What you just bought respect. You will never have a pain if you do like this.²

Classic elegance, easy to carry and top-grade beautiful feature.³ Fold gently. Especially beginners, uneven force is relatively easy to bad.⁴ Pay attention to not be injured. Keep well for fear of danger.⁵

Under the following conditions, cannot be used correctly:

- (i) Moonwalk, wearing sandal;
- (ii) When walking in the tricky condition;
- (iii) Inebriation.⁶

The charge is free of charge, but possible bonus fees accrue.⁷

Do not fold, spindle, or mutilate.⁸ Beware of sharp point.⁹

Do not over-place, needle-prick, hammer or stand on.¹⁰

Is not correct manhandling.¹¹ Danger of suffocation.¹²

Rough may damage.¹³

Do not keep it in the quite high or low temperature environment, especially far away from fireplace.¹⁴ Tipping or rocking may cause serious death or injury.¹⁵ Do not glue to porous surfaces, such as pregnant women, pets, or heavy machinery.¹⁶

Do not use as projectile.¹⁷ Do not ironing.¹⁸

During the use, abnormal conditions such as releasing heat.¹⁹

If there is excessive heat or change colors, stop use immediately.²⁰

Respect maintenance. Normal wear and tear OK.²¹

Please remove dirty or dust on surface when stick.²²

Do not fixes or disable the core.²³ Do not apart, separate, or dissemble or the damage cannot be guaranteed.²⁴

Do not force.²⁵ Go smoothly by.²⁶

¹ Rice cooker, brand unknown.

² From "How to shape the men flaps"; product unknown.

³ Bench drill, brand unknown.

⁴ IM 43229949 V1 Electic throw blanket.

⁵ Product #500527, P.O. 77007472/0907.

⁶ LCD Stepping Meter operational manual; brand unknown.

⁷ Candy Crush Saga knockoff game.

⁸ A warning printed on IBM punch cards (1930s).

⁹ Screwdriver and bit set, brand unknown.

¹⁰ Cell phone screen protector, brand unknown.

¹¹ Reddit comment on the viewing of the Sham Sharma Show.

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- ¹² Fiskars plastic-bladed scissors without functional sharp edges – plastic bag warning.
- ¹³ Clothing tag, brand and garment unknown.
- ¹⁴ *Mata taneczka* dance mat, Model V647, instruction #8.
- ¹⁵ Stag Liuzza Class I recall.
- ¹⁶ High Cotton doormat.
- ¹⁷ StylinBreeze60, product details unknown.
- ¹⁸ Shein sage green polyester duvet cover.
- ¹⁹ Sea&Sea Underwater Strobe YS-01 Solis.
- ²⁰ Testifire 1000 Series detector.
- ²¹ Description for 1617 9th St #9, Des Moines, IA. First month's rent is free.
- ²² Qingdao Smad Electric Appliances microwave.
- ²³ Ryzan 5 3600 cooler.
- ²⁴ *Mata taneczka* dance mat, Model V647, instruction #7.
- ²⁵ Obaku adjustable mesh bracelet.
- ²⁶ 1962 Honda motorcycle.

Reunion

We don't remember the last time our hands
touched. Seven years? Ten? Perhaps it was

December, the buck-legged table next to the bar,
our glasses empty of everything but goodbye.

Or was it the rain? All we know is our table
isn't there anymore and we've become strangers,

dunes shifted beneath the wind. We call out
across the water: *I am here. Are you listening?*

by which we really mean, *Do we still love?*
Wherever we meet again isn't open enough

to hold our stories, the careful sums
of everything we've done while we were busy

forgetting each other. We don't say what we mean
because we don't know what we mean, that

"How have you been?" is really "Who are you?"
and "Fine," is "Where do I begin?"

We settle on our hands and everything
they've brushed, every silver-capped pen

and lover's waist, the things they've made
and something they've buried. We cannot

share everything. It's getting late and our
glasses are empty. We can never know

who's ready for our everything, anyway,
and time has taught us to err on caution.

Let's do this again sometime, we say instead,
whether or not we really mean it. But when we do –

when we really do mean it – there are many things
we think but do not say. Thank you, for one.

That perhaps we were meant to find each other,
even if we don't know why. That maybe something

splendid is waiting to unravel, or maybe not.
All we can ever really ask of each other

is another table and full cups.
This, too, is love.

In which I befriend an alt-right sympathizer

because it's impossible to know the color
of the sky, that *love* can mean *listen to me*
and *listen to me* can mean *hate*.

We live for these divisions: man, woman,
right, wrong. He tells me he has depression;
I tell him he's not alone. I've seen it

in the men with heavy fists, the women
they've struck. I, too, have had my body held
at gunpoint. It's in our nature,

his influencers claim, to point our weapons
at the sky. Is he aware of this? How deep
does this sympathy lie? Can we look past it

in friendship? We each read *The Tao*, comment
on the rain, how water smooths all stone.
What must it be like, to be born beneath

a different wind? How heavy is your skin?
The same soul beats in all of us; of this
I am certain. We must love, love, love until

all else is washed away. But how heavy is a stone?
How far can we trust? When does *hate*
become *listen* and *listen* become *love*?

One day we will remember

The world likes to test us
in all manner of aching ways.

An injury. An illness. A lover
who has forgotten to call.
A mother who did not know
how to hold you.

We come to make peace
with these tragedies,
for there is no other way.

The wind stills.
Sunlight parts the dust.

Perhaps one day
it will be different.
Perhaps we will know
how to hold
the winter close,
how to tether ourselves
to stars. It will all
make sense then,
we will forgive them,
and all that will remain
is love.

Safety precautions

When I was a child and the world
was still beautiful,
my mother taught me
five thousand ways
to die.

There were the scissors,
with their insidious tips.
The chemicals I would have never
thought to drink.

A thousand ways
to fall.

There are so many things
we inherit:

The spinning helixes
deep within our skin –
instruction manuals, I am told,
for how our bodies
hold breath.

The houses we are brought to
before *roof* becomes a word.

And our gods,
with their distant fists
and commandments
for how to love.

We take what is given because
there is no other way,
no other remedy
but the warning
that we must never
run with scissors.

Fear is so much easier to carry.

Now that I'm older, I've begun
to discover the other pieces
of my inheritance.

One is breath,
I can tell you this.

Another is love.

My mother will never know

[...]

the greatest gift she gave me
has been the chance
to learn it all again –

to discover five thousand ways
to witness the beauty
 of this world,

five thousand ways to live.