

cyclists dressed like they're sponsored by Specialized but are actually just *ahjusshi* amateurs

the feeling of walking onto the subway and completely blending in with your own people, until you are forced to speak

leaflets advertising *noraebang* help

beer pitchers sized by the CC or liter

rubberized yellow bumps marking the start of a crosswalk

church *ahjummas* with plump but perfect skin

FaceShop door greeters with perfect skin

students with acne-ridden faces turned downward

plastic-wrapped plastic-protected paper protectors

unnecessarily reflective elevator walls

subway cars that shine like spaceships, floating

the feeling that drinking together until three in the morning is less about the drinking and more about the morning

squishy *mandu* steaming inside Seven-Elevens

alleyways the color of trash at night, asphalt in the morning

hikers with 200,000-won carbon fiber poles

TV-quality screens in bus stops, train stations, dental offices, taxis

umbrellas, parasols, whitening sunblock, shade, dainty wrists

price bottled soju < price bottled water <<< price for working late

cars only in black, white and gray

worn brick walls just one layer peeled back

a test for every job: government jobs, corporate jobs, sanitation jobs, entrance to academies to prep for jobs

convenience store drinks glowing like Jolly Ranchers

duck-billed hats, oversized sunglasses, white gloves

a sadness that feels more intense than melancholy and more subtle than grief