

## BODY

It's strange to want to give someone the earth  
again. It's strange to be the same planet  
but split to forge a new, raw globe,  
past plundered by lovers and strangers. Forgot  
the way my own earth cracks and tries to make  
its half an other's, forgot old stories re-made  
to fable, to a minor bible for a plastic land.  
We walk our planet and the print of our feet scrawls  
on to our bodies. Each morning we walk to unearth  
more mountains. Each day I sing the valleys  
alive. Each night you find a dark pool,  
and when you test it with your toe, a green  
river ruptures. A quiet mirror opens.

## APPLE

The night the earth's crust cracked  
under us, great  
hands reaching

to brush the earth's skin

to crane red fingers up

and caress the green

we felt the planet wrench herself,  
rip soil from rock, split trees  
shudder buildings till they broke

and tore our own eyes wider

## AFTER BATTLE

This stitching between bodies isn't skin.  
It's only old rope, easily cut.

Where the seam tears there's blood.

I found a body under the trees,  
thrown from its horse.

I wrapped taut silk around its bones  
and watched the rivers roam the roads.

It was just me and the body.

I pretended it lived, and together we listened  
to the sly sounds between trees.

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I want you to come here,  
restitch your head to your shoulders,  
and form a word with your mouth.

Come here and surrender.

Because there're still days that my army  
loses horses, days I lose sun

and try to saddle up the darkness –

and whenever we ride to battle together, it rains  
and we cannot see sky for water,  
and the grass becomes dirt, and

waves break the fields, and the bodies  
all muddle into the earth.  
And although your breath

was once pressed into mine,  
I no longer know who's against me.

WAIATA

Morning and your eyes  
    blow open, encircled by ripples of skin.  
You're looking at the wall – at the white square the mirror  
                                    once covered.

*Did you really let out all the birds?* you say. I put  
    my hand on your neck  
    but your head won't move. Your eyes

look like the holes left  
    when two stones are  
    thrown in a river.

EYED

One way's easy but an easy way's  
    worse. Fear  
            cracking on these lies' rocks, fear  
oceans that'll swallow our rolling  
    eyes. Our masks may only  
            fool ourselves, but we are  
the only damn fools that matter. I want you not  
    to stop your fear but reach your fingers  
                                    deep in it.  
Say well, what do we have here.  
Say what can't we make when we're together.

## AIR

You wake on the plane and mistakes ooze out of you

Mistakes ooze out of you like pus squeezed from skin

Look out the window and all's yellow

Every minute's infected

And it's your last chance to choke the ocean

for the plane to crash like a dancer

for you to smell the earth

We live in a staggering time signature

## WHAT IT TAKES

Takes a war. Takes wine. Takes winters gulped  
by birdcall, a smart girl who makes spit  
turn to stone. She swears: it's so.

Our minds know no-such-*so*, and  
soon-oh we'll lose all our livery.

Our vials are filled with dried-up springs.

*Never to be a magician, Miranda.* You quip,

OK, and I'll quiver. But our nevers are  
always present. Our nevers we can't lose.