

Grown Without Water

water

Have you seen the hummingbirds?
They're carrying the things we grew from the dirt
in their mouths.
Shape shifting in the light.
Our children's grandmother feeds them every season,
lacing the nectar with all the secrets we've carried safely here.
After she's prepared the nectar
she catches rainbows in the crystal prisms she hid in the windows
and watches as her prayers move with the sunlight
across the living room floor.
a prayer to the hummingbirds so they'll listen
And burn our secrets up when they flap their wings toward the sun.

dirt

Below the earth and beyond the sky,
dig your feet in.
A wind is gonna come and you'll blow away
if you haven't learned to root yourself without water.
The sound of sirens
in another place
in another world
can break your will.
That world is not yours. It is not for you.
You cannot reach it.
You cannot claim it.
Even as it's running through your veins.
They turned the desert's spine to metal and stapled it to the earth,
to make the marrow in our bones push rust out our nails.
And still. It is not yours.
What is in us came from our grandmothers who came from there
so we could come from here.
And still. It is not yours.
Can you walk with burned feet?
Have you seen a body break?

fire

Before the year 2000
Ripped from his roots, he flew
down an arroyo into water.
Breaking everything, the water rose to swallow him.
To break him.
To break them all.
Relentless and dancing,

the world and its whispers
made a home in her eyelids that day.
Years later, the water came back again,
a perfect lover.
Inviting her down to hide among the stones
that glow in moonlight from another world.
The same night, the water came back again,
a ghost.
Turning dirt to mud,
the desert's spine slithered over land.
And there, below its imprint,
a man was living in the dirt
buried long ago by his father
by his mother
by a whirling world.
The children's bones are covered in their fathers' leather skin,
their slow, careful voices- gifts from men.
The fathers here disappear with each new word learned,
as buried men often do.
An easier goodbye
because the hummingbirds have come.

Air

There's a place where nothing lives
The sound of bones cracking breaks an endless silence.
Two breaths circle one another through the air like waves moving in and out of shore.
My breath becomes a lover
a healer
a bed.

I return to every woman I have ever been
as the air pulls me from the mountain
out over a dry sea.

Waiting there, I listen for the parting of the land
to pull me back into my footsteps
where a small hand is waiting for mine.

Dirt

Have you seen the hummingbirds?
They're carrying the things she'll grow
from the dirt in their mouths.
Shape shifting in the light.
Soon, I'll prepare the nectar
and watch
as my prayers move with the sunlight

across the living room floor.

A prayer to the hummingbirds so they'll listen

and burn our secrets up when they flap their wings toward the sun