billow and pulse

Abi Pollokkoff
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wide open in the meadow, a shell in the greenspeak. wide open & spinning in it.

gold thread spinning here, gold heads tipsy. gold thread on the arm & gold thread in the eye: glisten & flicker & glisten & gleam.

wingkissed & airy, i’m full up in lilies. all harken & bloom. all sunnery.

burrow in the toes & take root. don’t leave the windwatch, don’t leave the furl. fingers in flicker & display. in parity & pearl the little nailbeds, settled & stretched. palms bedded down with terrain, all tucked in & gleaming.

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those toes are rooted now, bone, something to keep covered. the skin: a mesh with its own weakness.

process & pestilence: virus in the touch of the earth, soaked all in & sobbing. see it & retreat. see it & believe. the body is the muscle & the dirtstrain. the muscle strains & splinters.

this is the body being soaked
up. this is the body being soaped in. this is body being pulled down, pushing out its skin & pruning. falling skincaved into granite & dismay. this is body rejecting itself.

this is the self’s screech & summon: this, what’s silent & screaming.

the minute & the month take the same time: breath only one breath, only one breach.

* in this always assuming state: tongue all twisted up about itself. so many things in the body, all sucked up from below. so many things in the body, so many things to cave it. hard things & soft things. hard things & soft things. hard things & soft things all up the spine.

so: self-diagnose. self-medicate. self-mediate. measure & miss. measure & miss. measure & measure again. remind the self to be human. remind the self to be animal. tell the self to be tame. grow a little.

a breeze in the breath. a music
now, what the body is made of.
breathe some life into the spine
& willow through it. bend &
don't break. beseech. beseech.
beseech. beseech.

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toes in the row of earth now,
self grows out the self.
wingkissed & airy, all full up in
lilies. what aroma here, what
odor. virus in the touch of it,
unboned & burning.

all full up with oil & thistle: love
the lump & curdle of it, a
disappearing act. pluck & dry.
crush & inhale. this body is
made of all these beautiful dead
things, all wormed up. all
wriggling. worms stretch the
rustle here: ruby in the root.
ruby on the brow. ruby is the
pebble & the sweat.

so soundless, this body,
bedded down with nettles. all
worked out & something to
grow, to gather. the madness is
a muscle, stretched & tensing.
all verbed out. all swallowing.
all worked out, the root & rush
of it now, all spineplucked &
empty. what toes. what root.
what vertebrae.
Abi Pollokoff

Abi Pollokoff is a Seattle-based writer and book artist with work forthcoming or found in EX/POST, KALEIDOSCOPED, The Seventh Wave, EcoTheo, and Denver Quarterly, among others. Her work has been supported by the Jack Straw Cultural Center, Hugo House, The Seattle Review of Books, more. Currently, Abi is the managing editor for Poetry Northwest Editions and the events manager for Open Books: A Poem Emporium, along with spending time in many other hats. She received her MFA from the University of Washington. Find Abi at abipollokoff.com.