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### Piecemeal

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg

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Piecemeal

for e.

Glass shatters - it is the recollection of the pieces  
which stings.

One

This is how it happens:  
Air lifts pieces of the ground up, into itself  
Weaving through strands of sun, taking particles  
To make himself pure motion.

The pieces are not missed.  
Or rather, there are gaps he must linger in  
To give the impression of fullness.  
The pieces are not missed.  
They are not remembered as solids  
Like buildings beside vacant lots or lost birds.  
There is only an impression that something is off  
Or vague or maybe just wind of the mind all along.

This continues for years, for lifetimes  
For pieces of history until the earth reclaims itself.  
Volcanic ash fills him, thunder makes him shiver  
And he chokes on his own abundant breath until  
He spits back what he has called his own  
For the earth to cleanse and set free.

Two

This is how you happen:  
You light a match and nothing else ignites.  
You call this power and go on lighting small flames  
Until you cannot breath.  
The trees offer you air but you are blinded by flight.  
The oceans offer you yourself but you are caught in the undertoes  
(thinking you are inventing waves).  
The earth hardens and the skies thin  
(and this is not your doing).

This is not the weather.  
This is not your wrapper-life.  
This is not to be ignored,  
Not the skin of water  
Or the dust silk of roofs,  
The weight of air breathed through a thousand other lungs.  
This is not a warning or a god.  
If you want to fly you must first find a mirror which paints your bird eyes,  
You must listen to the old women in the backs of buses, to broken leaves  
And, most of all, to the pulse of the cracks in your sleep.  
You must read your life like a good poem  
And stop revising past lines.

There are pieces you are missing  
Gaps which try to trip you in your sleep.  
You are not the air but something which moves from it.  
You were never really looking for comfort  
But that does not mean you have not found it.

You will pour like sand through yourself.  
You will move like water onto your land.  
You will stretch like wind beyond your sight.

This is your answer.  
These are your wings.

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