

who can afford tomorrow

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the prettiest girl I know has
cellulite that backs her thighs
like a milky way
we have reached the age where
all of our mothers have died
or are dying
and none of our hands
are big enough to catch
the sands of time
and stop
if we live long enough
we will see the northern lights
but who can afford Alaska
or Iceland
or tomorrow
and everything is disaster
bad stars
exploding
our own shadows land in our own way
when supernovas die to light the path
this is the way we become
our own elders
ancestors of every uncovering
long thighs riddled with
scars
big hands reading palm lines
and tea tales and
grasping at straws
who can afford
America
Light lingers in the craters on
my hollow cheekbones
like a moon rock
I am invincible for today
who can afford tomorrow

yes. more.

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in pleasure
we revert to the new language
of toddlers
yes
no
again
stop
play
mine
share
yes
more
yes
more

at our most
vulnerable we are laid naked
bodies wanting what Bodies
want
learning new tongues around
new words and touching tactile
fingertips and
Lips

I take this practice to my writing
throw off my jacket
unclasp my mother's necklace from my neck
slide my socks off my wide feet
and set my correspondent hands to the keys
play
I ask myself what feels good and where to stop
a line
an idea
what it feels like to start over
blind and gummy
nippy in the cold air
naked as the day I was born

Berry said
practice resurrection
Even at this we will fail

first
again
again
half alive and newly new
we are poor advocates for our bodies
for our desire
quiet voice and quivering
We do not yet know the language yet of love
of Self
so again
we must come
again we must come
into the world in a state of fresh panic
surprised by our aliveness
surprised by the cold of our palms
the warmth of our one beating heart
yours
the practice of desire

yes
more
yes
more

junk drawer arm (moving on)

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my junk drawer arm
my grab box of stories
we pushed
laughing
a king mattress up a narrow flight of stairs
every move a removal
a remembering
cardboard memories
wrapped and labeled
fragile
til we drop it
laughing
down a narrow flight of stairs

do you talk to your parents still
what are
the chances we both ended up
here

Neighbor
Nemesis
Next door
Next life
what if we had never tattooed symbols on young skin and promised
hearts forever

now, my tattooed arm
lifts with your
Scarred thighs
one two three push
a life into living
a forever into
what might have been

It's not the gun

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name me one bridge ever built from the spent casings of a gun
one life saved on a surgical table thanks to a well timed bullet in an unprepared head
tell me about your community coming together under the cross of the 2nd amendment
serving 22 rounds from a potluck table
name me a child rescued from poverty with the small loan of one million rifles
tell me about the women's shelter you constructed from your 45s
look me in the eyes and tell me In God You Trust but only because you are armed and
dangerous

tell me you are safer because you are able to kill
tell me you are safer because you are able to kill

tell me this wouldn't have happened if the teachers were armed
with rifles and handguns not
truth and justice and story and heartbeats
tell me you believe some children are collateral to win the culture war
tell me thoughts and prayers
tell me it's not the gun it's the shooter

It's the books
It's the internet
It's new wave feminism
It's the non binary kids
It's the system
It's lack of faith
It's not the gun
It's not the gun

tell me you are safer because you are able to kill

tell me the masks! Covid! rock music! the devil! Black Lives Matter! Women's Rights! we were
better when men with guns were in charge. we were safer because you were able to kill.

build me a school from the bones of cold dead kindergarteners.

build another fucking shrine and cover their bodies with thoughts and prayers but first

show me a bridge built from bullet casings.
revitalize a neighborhood with lock, stock and barrel
tell me blue lives matter.
name me a kindergartner as collateral

show me a school shooter armed with a book

It's the liberals

It's the gays

It's the books.

It's the mothers

It's not the gun

the cost of revolution for a white girl

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there's always a brand
waiting to be developed
around the
recently graffitied or
recently scrubbed
corner of any revolution
my social media stream advertises
black lives matters face masks
a white girl sells handmade
head coverings for white kids who
walk past whitewashed buildings
chanting black lives matter
in the whitest corner of
the midwest
today's revolution is two-for-one
basically free for basically free
privileged people with padded
name brand pockets
I pause and judge our
collective energy
for creating apparel
instead of solutions
someone says
"this work is orchestral"
and I rush home to
sketch a t-shirt
so I can say I've
done my part