

Inexorably Tangled

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We built this work collectively through a scaffold of poems we had each written. We wrote into the spaces between each other's lines, back and forth, reaching and stretching to create a new structure. At times the words felt strange, like something we'd never say. At times the words of the other felt like our own. Finally, we removed the scaffolding to see if the structure would hold. It did. We read the new poems to a room full of people in a community library and felt the words reverberate. We rearranged the words to fit the surfaces of these pages. We waited for them to be read.

Actual Words

*shh what we long for
holding space, holding*

this is yes this is this is

homes ache homes shake

what we can see what can we see

shame is for perpetrators

*perpetual husbands
he should he should he should not*

mine mine mine it's mine

how it's mine it's yours
my body your body
our law

laws
those regulations
written by men
imposed on women

how law makers'
biases
assume sovereignty

why can he not keep his hands
off
my body

weight
one moment
wait
that onslaught that
piling demanding my silence
more crucial more mundane
always life's two things at once
demanding two women at once
victim and survivor
wait
a moment to think
resist a positioning
resist
not screaming resisting
wait no
my version
mine

listen
patient as words come
my say
let me say my say
finally my way
my way inexorably tangled
interstitially
hey, I say, hey
I need, I get to
It's mine My story
But also always his also theirs
to tell
will you listen
hey it's not a plea from me
no more pleading
my power burns
in this story
there're two ways
my story leaps
a horse hurdling
a mountain lion pouncing
hey it's mine
it's my face in the puddle
blood drips off my muzzle
My power Mine
my supplied powerful paddings
I say now

her story includes showing shame on him
her story includes blood on his weaponized cock
her story includes she did nothing wrong
her story insists on the tell, persists in the telling
her story eradicates silence
her story resists fists in her brain
her story insists on the peace she deserves
her story punches up
her story takes up power
her story is not here
her story belongs to her
her story makes other women stronger
her story can be read here
her story is always elsewhere
her story is embedded
her story is narrative
is poetic
is insistent
her story is one day
her story will change
her story
is fact
her story exists

NO LONGER

The way the light hits
What a woman sees coming
The problem of skin of flesh
Hers and her perp's

Bad days bad bad days
Asymmetrical days
Powerlessly wishing
Let her hair hang free of his fists

Let

Let me tell you about the time by the water
Where I grew up
He was my friend's best friend
So was his girlfriend
He was my ride home from the party

*friends don't
don't
I said don't*

bad days drank it all up

bad days did the things water does in a storm

On my way back from that night
I learned the way by scent
Blood the witness my blood
Moon moved my feeling from numbness

To will I will

We will We will our women's will

We will We will

We will our women's will

over every description and deception

I will We will We will

We will

Our will

Who are we

What is our will

I try to see it

Will you see it with me

our will joins us

watery, green

we will always

swing through

In our looking

I (may) appear (more) myself placed in my principles

*I see (that)
I hear it all
hear her hear you*

*my listening deep and cool
listening slow and persistent
power builds in the hearing*

*I could listen
for (all) ways
In looking back
a crystalized strike
shake the ball for
different answers
I may appear
larger this time
more powerful next
a glass dispersion
bright shards
illuminate care
as if you care
your caring
matters little
here/go
away*

One story breaking into the next
How hard to feel this world in this world
Such the darklight

Help me call the sky back