

# Helina Hookoomsing

## Pachamama

Your shrine is a hallowed rock,  
The bole of a tree of bones  
inside me, my ribs are rose quartz  
and my breasts are curved into the image of your face,  
my fertility carved out from your soil

For *martes de challa* I spilled blood onto your scalp,  
Massaged it in with my feet,  
And buried my food in the cradle of your bellybutton,  
Where it is burned, offerings on the ceremonial pyre,  
As bright as fields shimmering, golden wheat like cosmic sand

Grains flickered into oblivion – consumed within  
the hungry mouth of Agni, this eternal sun,  
The last years of my life  
spent curling inwards towards these flames,  
Fetus, head bowed, limbs bent,  
Slowly and unexpectedly imploding like the first star

When will I birth into a new galaxy?  
Scatter myself across space, all my love reborn  
in the palm of your hand, as a small stone,  
You plant me in the tapestry of your forgiveness,  
The philtre of your tears is a monsoon,  
Your shrine is a hallowed rock,

The bole of a tree of bones  
inside me, I am stone, a shapeless statue  
of stillness and silhouettes,  
Vibrating in rhythm with your heaving sighs

I hear a final lullaby,  
This invocation to something ancient  
This prayer to the heavens  
This incantation to lift the veil of the sky,  
Cocoon me in this naked shroud –  
When there is nothing left to harvest,  
Nothing left to eat or drink,  
All wicker-like connections, cut  
and blackened – dry umbilical cords,  
Ugly reminders of the truth,  
We forget who we are

Note to poem: punctuation as intended.