

My Favorite Place in Nature (by Nadia Chaney)

After work a walk through the cow field, two sad tents left standing, the clothesline dragging low with lost wet towels, the old bull there, tired from yesterday's teasing, to the lake rocks at Linnea

We lie naked, an even thirteen of us, on wide ledges of rock and thrusting thin sharp grasses, (deep in the cracks is another red crabbly grass, short and thick bodied, damp inside when squeezed). The dark clean lake below, with just a hint of swimmer's itch. The lowest rock shelf submerged, warm water and seaweed slimy and lime and bulbous as organs. We sit there smoking rollies and winding our limbs around each other's softnesses

or we swim out on a raft, pushing each other off and screaming

Blue and gold dragonflies flit onto our wet shoulders and hover in our hair. A grandmother madrone above, peeling delicately, and in moments of silence, whispers of her curling poetry. We dive into the dark cool water, the yellow brown of the light that streams into the water, the deep down softness of the sandy earth below, barely make it up with one breath, gasping and floating and blowing bubbles

The heat lifts the smell of the rocks. A wise smell, dry flinty and full of time. Wet patches smell like fish and seawood, rotty and pungent

I want you to see our skin, when it is released of clothing, how we become part of the landscape, as features not subjects, with our tangled hair and vulnerable armpits and the tanned lean look of long work physical and the balance in the face from superdoses of fresh far north pacific air. I want you to smell us, perfume of skin and cunt and hair. Under the sun drenched sky all the notes hang and harmonize together. I want you to sense the white clouds in the sky, they feel like my body on the rocks. Reverse the elements and I am hanging in these rocks like a soft cloud of skin, fat and muscle

The roundness of bellies, the hardness of calves, skin tones in their chromatic scales. I want you to feel the brush of the rough grasses, the way they spring through the rocks.

In the shallows are tiny soft purple crabs and sliver minnows in schools.



This body, not an apology (By Danni-Rae Mistaken Chief)

this body, not an apology

this body, a river, in constant movement
forgiveness

this body, a mountain, in constant stillness
wisdom

this body not here for your words, your loud,
not here for your hands moulding me into something i m not

this body not a guest book,
not an invitation, not a scrap piece of paper for your poetry that feels more like a knife

this body, an eviction notice,

this body, not sorry

this body stitched together by my strong hands
woven together with love and patience

this body relearning how to love
growing without your sharp thorns digging deep into my back,
suffocating my roots

pretending to make love to me, the illusion of a good fuck
your fuck, not my fuck

this body, not sorry

weep into the night, talk of your sorrow

this body not an outlet for your anger
your trap, your box

this body a meadow
you may think home for the predator, the chase, the attack

this body stronger than your teeth, your claws grabbing me back

this body knows how to run, to hide

this body not here for your hands
keep chasing, trying

this body moving mountains, creating journeys
ridges, waves

this body not made to carry guilt like a message

this body not a letter for your ink to tell my story

this body is mine, all mine
this body, not sorry

this body is not an apology

