



Wabi-sabi

I was thirty-three before I learned
people stuck in snow
can die from dehydration.

I would melt icicles
on my tongue for you, resist
the drinking down, drip it
into you. Then repeat, repeat
until my lips were raw.

Deep snow squeaks. We
stop on the Desert Road
because of the snow. You
throw snowballs at the
'Warning: Army Training Area' sign.
I take macro-photographs of
icicles on tussock.

When we drive up the Desert Road
we lose National Radio, we lose
cellphone reception, we lose
all hope. I was thirty-seven before
I considered not trying to always fix
things. I read an article in the *New Yorker*
about wabi-sabi – the beauty in the
broken and the worn. The integrity
of the much-used utilitarian object.

But then there was another article
about a woman flying to Mexico
to be put in a coma
so she can wake up mended. *It is*
like rebooting a computer, said the doctor.

Despite wabi-sabi, I want that.
To live in snow and not be thirsty.
I want good reception all the way
up the country. I want a shiny, clean
version of myself. Closedown,
hibernate, restart.

Cartography of flesh

In winter, I lose my body. I am all-brain, all-jangled neurotic loops.

I call to you body, land beneath my neck,
cartography of scars, bruises, scabs. Down in the south there,
it bleeds, it bleeds. Terrain of cotton and nylon and lycra
stretched over hillocks. Tectonic feet. Seismic activity –
steam rising and the grinding of bone against cartilage,
against the very central meat of me.

I pace around the house doing the banal daily, wrapped in wool
and wool and wool. Trying to never be naked. Trying to
walk a new path through this hard season. Failing. I am
a bottle of olive oil put into the fridge – my usual sleek green
solid, cloudy. I am stuck in the vessel. I won't pour.