

you were on top of us freely

by Jerry Ratch

I remember you were on top of us freely, and we were starry with enjoyment. You turned to the beautiful youth because we were light, because we were so full of life
that our skin alone could not seem to contain us.

We were burning, burning on all sides for the world. Shade, shadow — nothing. Nothing the moon. You lifted the cloth and peered under. *“She is beautiful, Oh! She is pretty,”* I heard you saying. I was speechless and faint, and I could barely breathe.

“Beautiful the delta, beautiful the breast, the cultivated land, the territory, the soil,” you said. I picked myself up off the soil like a handful of dust, and you made me bloom, borne out of nothingness, like a little goddess.

And it came out in your song. Our fertile voices carried across water, so that our would-be lovers struggled to get near us, our opened lives pouring out upon the sea, spilling out of our own hands, foolish and faintly crying.

