



## Salt Remembers

Karina Quinn

*“Salt Remembers” is one body, telling the story of desire. It is a space where poetry inhabits flesh; it is a space where, finally, this body speaks. It is an interrogation of the Law of Silence for queers and women, and especially for those of us who pulse at the very thought of perverse sexual practice. Each time I am willing to say I leak, and drool, and gag, and bleed; I am torn, I am stitched, I am cut, I am opening, I am shut, someone reads the echo as it shimmers between substance and text and says yes, this. Some other body speaks, and tells the story of itself, and the quantum shiver repeats. Echo. Mirror. Mimesis. We speak. There is nothing more dangerous than this.*

### Salt Remembers

When I write about desire I almost can't put  
my finger on it, that slipping place  
an arc of wetness, pearling; the way I always grapple  
with blood.

When I write about desire I end up tied down,  
I end up wrapped around  
you I end up aching to be crushed like  
salt rocks dropped to the floor and turned to grit  
under your heel like being pushed under the  
surface like the floor is a horizon like we are moving  
into sunbright sky like blue is more than a colour  
like blue is more than this day that wraps itself  
around the both of us and gathers my voice with its  
moan and laces the lilac tree with it. Because sound travels  
and the window at the front of our house thinks it is a mirror  
that will take my opening throat and send it back to me.

When I write about desire my fingers remember  
all the places they have been, and begin to curl,  
cupping every warmth they have ever held  
in the center of a mnemonic fist. As if my hand were  
an embryo. As if the anatomy of my fist cradled every  
moment and had never forgotten how to hold it, still.



Still. In the night, against the sheets, it will grab  
at everything it can find. It will say this, and there,  
this is how I know you, this is what I knew, then. It will  
ask for more, it will say this is almost never enough. You will  
tell me (again) how greedy I am. And my body will remember.

The body will remember. Later, it will tell the story of the night,  
the afternoon, the darkling day. Later, it will dream red, and electric,  
and shooting, and blunt. Later, it will ache after sensation like salvation.

Later, it will tell you desire is what makes us who we are. It will ask you why  
you insist on not-remembering this. It will draw a line you have never seen before: it  
will show you where flesh meets, where it stretches and beats. It will  
describe for you an edge that has lost its edge. It will say here, and here,  
this  
is where you touch me.  
Here.

Later, it will make a nest for you. It will curl you into itself. It will tell  
you a story. It will talk to you about its beating heart, the crushed salt, its fist.

It will tell you that blue is more than a colour, that the window is a mirror that  
draws pictures with your moans. It will remind you that the floor is a horizon.  
That we are all grains beneath feet. That we are all fists, closing around memory,  
looking for bliss.

The body is salt.  
The body is water.  
The body is ocean, waiting to escape.

Salt remembers what hasn't happened yet.

KARINA QUINN is an academic and creative writer working in queer theory, fictocriticism, and post-structuralist and feminist theories of the body, subjectivity, and self. She writes short fiction, poetry, and fictocriticism, and is currently writing her PhD dissertation, "this body, writing," at La Trobe University in Melbourne. An accomplished poet and spoken-word performer, Karina was recently awarded second prize in the prestigious, long-running Newcastle Poetry Prize for her poem "Always Going Home (A Domestic Cycle)." She is also co-managing editor of an interdisciplinary gender, sexuality and diversity studies journal, *Writing from Below* (<http://www.writingfrombelow.org.au>).