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Two poems

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To Adrienne Rich

(After "Diving into the Wreck")

*the thing I came for:
the wreck and not the story of the wreck
the thing itself and not the myth
– Adrienne Rich, "Diving into the Wreck"*

I sit with my coffee
on a Sunday at 2:43pm
reading your poems like
scripture, searching
for the
answers, diving
into the hold,
the place where we are
bare,
ugly, and toothless.

Comforted by the
ones who have come
before:
each rung,
each breath,
reaching out, by
reaching in.

Oxygen and mask
in hand,
I submerge
into the blue
then green then
black.

We are
half-destroyed by
instruments of
our making, but
still we go down,
the ladder is always
there after all, hanging
not so innocently.

And in the end,
in the wreck,
as I search and stumble,
headlamp, and battery pack,
oxygen, and iPhone in hand
we are, I
am, you
are
with me.

Equinox

My body knows
this prevernal reckoning
that Wikipedia tells me
is “pre-spring”
long before I click to it.

Knots in my knees,
from where I bend
to coax the crocuses
from this earth, parched
and breaking open,
a sign-post in our aching.

I whisper to the dirt:

Take me to the forest,
a bridge of trees to
mend this space,
a place where wild
things grow, lavender
and bloodroot, periwinkle
and hawkweed.
A place where light
fills the cracks, a place
where we are
healed,
our broken edges
as our guide,
loving
self, as all.

This is how we do it,
mastering alone, the stuff
relationships are made of,
in solitude and in company
with the ones
who hold your heart.

SARAH SWITZER is a community educator, artist, community-based researcher, and activist living in Toronto. Her creative practice is comprised of three dashes poetry, one dash photography, a half-dash of multi-modal performance, and always some sass. Her creative practice explores the relationship between natural and psychic/affective environments, as well as issues of sexuality, queerness, relationships and the body. Her professional and academic interests straddle the fields of community arts, HIV, harm reduction, engagement and arts-based, and community-based research. She is PhD candidate in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University.