

# **Under the wall**

Lily So-too

2015



Lily So-too, What do they do to you? (oil on canvas, 72 by 72 inches, 2004)

Take me to  
where my heart is sunken  
deep into the land  
stepped on, kicked, trampled, thought  
nothing of,  
to the place where people don't know that  
it is even there,  
supporting their weight.  
Let me love them anyway.

i am not divided from myself  
let me feel the ache of the person  
struggling to keep alive at the hands of another person  
and under a mechanized system  
designed to grind her back into stardust  
mine is the same body and breath  
that give her  
material right to be, to exist.

If you cannot hold it, why can you not hold it?  
Where in you is the fault line,  
where is this heavy break  
like you are on one mountain and  
the rest of the world is on another mountain?  
the fall between the rises, is not fooled.  
The land knows it is contiguous, it is one planet,  
one biosphere. It does not wonder if you are a part of it,  
even if you wonder if you are a part of it.

Were you there when people with guns  
kept us from getting food or fluid?  
What about when your freedom of movement  
through planes and buses and trains and cars and boats and cabs and all kinds of motorized travel  
became our inability to leave a small patch of land as it became swallowed by water?  
Were you absent then, in the exchange of unseeable gases, yours getting you where you want to go and  
the rest of us, going where no-one wants to go?

Were you there when the chemicals showered down  
making our children's children's children's bodies  
with molten limbs like the scars burned into the land,  
so that even if we lived, our culture held

the remnants of your choices  
like a wound from our own hand to our own hand  
we are here still, waiting for you to arrive.

You are always wanting more from the world, always seeking fire,  
you will find the last remaining match, here, where you left  
us beneath you.

–September 13, 2014

Lily So-too is a Northwest writer, painter, theatre-maker, dancer, musician, and ardent lover of life. Lily eschews gender pronouns, loves people, the living earth, birds, trees, and social movements that involve dancing and mischief.

# fifth Estate

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