

When I Am Asked to Write About Peace

When I am asked to write about peace, I want
to write the poem that will lift the buildings
from their resting place, re-knit their rebar bones,
salve each brick and set each plank of wood
back into place again, the poem that will puzzle
each chunk of concrete back into its foundation,
strong enough to keep on holding. I want to write
the poem that will re-open the eyes,
smooth the brows, flush each cheek
full of life again. I want to pull the earth
from its slow unwinding, wrap the tape up neatly
around my finger again. When I am asked
to write about peace, I want to tell you that we know it,
that cool shape running beneath everything
that we do, the rainbow body of a salmon
flashing its scales up out of the water. When I am asked
to write about peace, I hope we can all
remember it. I hope our fingers can make
the shape of it again, that our feet remember how to step
out onto it, our bodies remember it holding
our collective weight. This is what I want
to speak into bodied being – something
that begins and lives in each of us. I hope that when
we keep asking, in the best words we have
to offer, that when we keep raking, turning,
growing, seeding, that we will come upon it again somewhere,
that the perennial hope we are keeping
will survive a season of cold, and we will see it again
in the garden, a flash of light, a badge
of scarlet red.