



## Snake Song

Shauna Osborn

smell the earth  
with a flick of tongue  
creep along  
stomach full of fur & teeth

scales begin to rip  
& blood drains itself  
on the talons of an eagle

he moves you  
toward that familiar beak  
pisi<sup>1</sup> breath  
& blank black orifice  
jutting from his white feathered  
face

you land on the cactus  
red petals blushing out of the  
space of struggle

pisi mi?aræ<sup>2</sup>  
writhe  
spit venom  
curve your body back  
toward musty white  
feathers  
& strike

he forces a guttural tongue  
inside your back  
gurgles a reply

after sensations fade  
bloody scales drop over  
your deadened eyes

it's happened before  
will happen again  
[everyday a re-enactment  
of the creation story]  
& each time  
you will forget  
awaken in the Sonoran desert  
each day to give birth  
to pass egg after slimy egg  
from body to dank earth  
& later find part of yourself  
encased in an eagle's entrails

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<sup>1</sup> rotten infested festered

<sup>2</sup> becoming infected