

## Reclamation

young ones are angry  
women rally  
a community is tired of trying  
to make space  
and keep territories safe

humans push back time  
over population spilling  
into tricky treaties  
un-honoured, ripped and torn

how do we articulate  
multi-generational hate  
and calm our restless spirits?

they say “stand and fight  
a good fight  
use all the tools left”  
we are blessed  
with good minds  
our choices are wise

today we fight  
as a last resort  
when request after request  
goes ignored

we take a stand based  
on inherent land claims  
we are finished waiting  
for your good faith  
to kick in  
...so it begins

young warriors pierce the soil  
with the pole of our flag  
find inspiration around the fire  
where we gather as clans  
and sing our songs  
a call to arms

young ones are angry  
and women rally

## Peace, Truth, Reconciliation and Cold Porridge

I am choking on lessons, cut hair and bloody  
bended knees. Money-measured apologies paid  
for pain and suffering. Only the colonials boil  
it down to dollars and sensibility. No humility,  
humanity I understand, you’re just trying to make  
your god happy.

—words, war, words, war, words, were, words,  
war, words, where, words, were, words

—curator, creator, curator, creator, curator, crater,  
creator, greater, crater, curator, creator

—anthropology, apology, anthropology, apology,  
apathy, a party, anthropology, apology

—indian affairs, indians fair, indian affairs, indians  
fair, indie fear, indian affairs, indians

I am NOT aboriginal. I am not your fool. I make  
the books, you can read them. I choose my titles, so  
don’t tell me, don’t police me. From this moment  
on, now and forever more, it will be undone. I am  
laughing big gut hurting cheek bursting hilarious  
laughing. Fuck!

—contract, contact, contract, contact, con-act,  
contract, contact, call back, contract, contact

—beyond, belong, beyond, belong, be gone, begin,  
beyond, belong, beg, beyond, be gone

—police, please, police, please, politics, pollutes,  
please, police, politics, police, please

—living, leaving, laughing, loving, longing,  
leaving, living, luring, longing, living, leaving

We can never host enough fundraising dinners,  
wash white’s cars and pass the blanket dances

to raise enough money for plane tickets to see the pope, buy new clothes to kiss his filthy ring. My legs can never be strong enough to hold me long enough to stand in line for the cavity search before entering G-chambers to ask Harper, "What will YOU do, for US?"

—gnaw at us, not us, gnaw at us, not us, none of us, no guts, not tell us, gnaw at us, not us

—indian, in and in, indian, in and in, indian, indetermine, in and in, indian, in and in and in

—legitimate, litigate, legitimate, litigate, alienate, all hate, legitimate, litigate, alienate, hate

—arrogance, error against, arrogance, error against, air or gain, arrogance, error against

Hold me back, no more. We are born with freedom through activism and learn all too soon how to build blockades around our own successes. We may have forgotten how to live. We love our booze. We want to buy things. The secret need to breed the Indian out of us almost worked.

—activist, acting nice, activist, acting nice, acquiesce, activist, acting nice, activist, acting

—optimist, opportunist, optimist, opportunist, operate, optimist, O.P.P., opportunist

—branded, brain-dead, branded, brain-dead, branded, brunette, bandit, branded, brunette

—confederate, counterfeit, confederate, counterfeit, conference, confess, confederate

I live by the wampum law. They paddle one canoe, we'll paddle our canoe, and maybe we'll see you at the end of the river. I have never been consulted on all the Indian laws I'm made to live by. My father's

vote never made headlines and the grand chief only extends a hand to his friends. Not me.

—direct, derelict, delicate, direct, derelict, delicate, direct, derelict, delicate, dick, derelict

—contagious, contact us, contagious, control us, correct count, contagious, control us

—survival, serve all, survival, serve all, severe fall, serve all, survival, suicide fall

—pedophile, petrified, pedophile petrified, pedophile, personified, petrified, pedophile

There is no arguing that even after the pay-off, the apology and the many offices designated to deal with the Indian problem, we still experience Canada's polite form of racism, back-handed compliments and, "Oh, thanks for the body bags and slop buckets." And really, I just wish people would stop writing about us like recipes trying to define the ingredients, the complex combinations of spirit, intelligence, wit and strength.

—calories, calm ease, calories, calm ease, color ease, calm ease, calories, color ease

—new religion, new regions, new religion, new regions, new reasons, regeneration, religion

—story share, soft ware, story share, song share, tell and show, talent show, borrow

—residential, residual, residential, residual, reciprocal, residual, reschedule, responsible

The words birthed from the back of my tongue. I want them to bounce from my lips, exorcised like the demon language dug from deep guttural places undetected by X-ray and close examination. Everybody can't be dead already. I want my words back!