

## Prerequisite

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## Poetry by Wendy Brown-Baez



### Prerequisite

as if you could unravel yourself  
back to the beginning before you knew  
the patterns of flight

as if you were able to cartwheel your  
way through daydreams

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(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){(i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1\*new Date();a=s.createElement(o),m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m)})(window,document,'script','<https://www.google.com/analytics.com/analytics.js>','ga'); ga('create', 'UA-18260536-1', 'auto'); ga('send', 'pageview');

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thrilled by your childhood grace

as if the kiss hadn't started an unquenchable fire  
and the heartbreak hadn't been  
etched with your name

as if your straw bag was filled with *chocolaté*  
blended with chili, nestled on  
*Milagros*, tasting of faith

as if you had claimed your voice before it was silenced

as if the passport hadn't been lost and found,  
and lost and renamed, your fingertips  
stinging from wind and salt

as if you hadn't felt innocence crack  
and darkness fall over the world

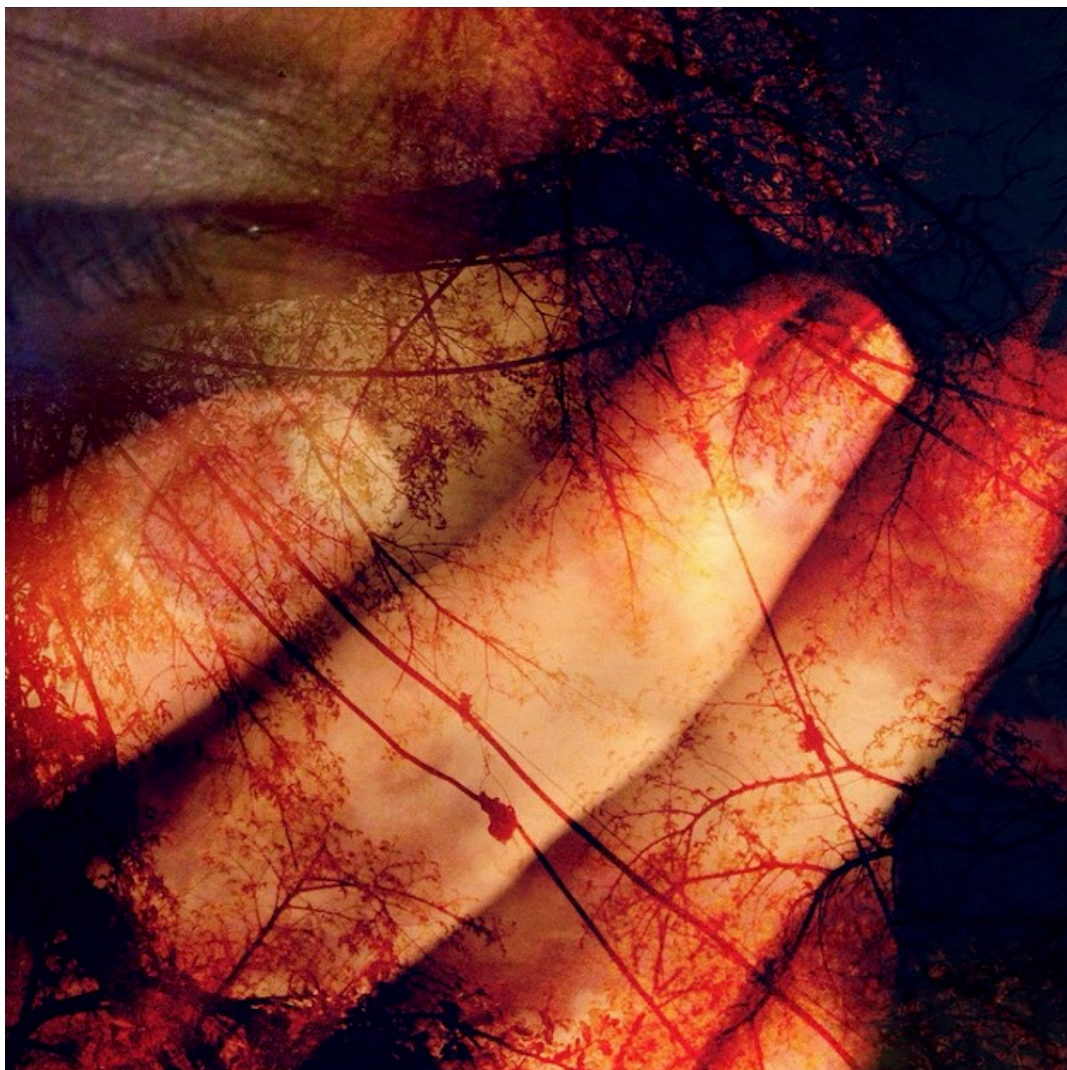
as if you could earn back what you gave away—  
soaring mountain vistas,  
sunsets of blood, scent of the pines

as if he was holding you in his arms  
instead of scattered as ash in three countries  
and four states

as if your tongue was a flame and the past only a candle

as if there was a choice but to move  
through the wilderness  
kneeling at beauty

as if this poem could be more than a door  
and more than a key



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### Art Information

- [Untitled](#) [6] and [“Skipping Down Kalisa Lane](#) [7]” © Breonny Lee; used by permission.

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Wendy Brown-Baez is the author of the poetry books *Ceremonies of the Spirit* and *Transparencies of Light*. Her poetry and prose have appeared in numerous literary journals and anthologies. Awarded the McKnight and Minnesota State Arts Board grant, she holds writing workshops for non-profits and youth in crisis. She also teaches as a member of the Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop, as well as at Pathways and at Face to Face Academy.

For more information, visit [Wendy Brown-Baez's website](https://www.wendybrownbaez.com/) [8].

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