

This place is the hot washing
wind in the diaphragm of valley

toads die here
blended into the dust

and yet something here grows

gems of sunlight
perched in the cloister of trees

gems of sunlight fallen
to the dry amber of earth

a noble woman gathering sunlight
in the creamy palm of her tired apron

bending low for the millionth time
asking her back to obey
for her haunches to spring tight
and release once more

she picks sunlight
off the cracked earth

gathering it from where
it has fallen rolled decided
to surrender its ripening to fate

she serves many dry throats
pulpy drinks of this sunlight
sweetened and iced and dancing
in the sweating glass pitcher

she soothes family friends travelers
all who spend any kind of moment
in her quiet yielding grove

she bakes pies of sunlight
crusted baths of golden filling
heated juices brought to tears
crusted over by what her heart
has made her hands knead
and roll and flour and love

her love spills into the bath of sun
her chemistry conspires with light
to produce a sweetness that
makes old men weep because
they have missed their season
in which they might have had her
had her kneading and rolling
and shaping their bread in
the fingers of her passion

she bakes cookies of light
creates custards of light and
preserves and jams and spices

she garnishes salads and
sandwiches in sunlight

with the peeled rinds of sunlight
she cleans her teeth
and freshens her breath
and fertilizes the garden
from whose caked blackness
grow the trees that bud then
blossom then bear the fruit
of sunlight

she washes her dishes in the
citric juice of this sunlight

her dreams cascade with sunlight
in one of them her dreams
she no longer wears her tired clothes

she is in the arms of her love
blanketed in breeze
in the plaintive shade of her trees

her heart is smiling and
the world has dissolved like sugar
and floated mistily away

her lungs breathe fresh air
her spirit has lost its cage of worries

she has loved this grove
and fed the hunger
and satisfied the thirst
of countless beloveds

she has grown silent and
curving like a river
in the arms of this grove

and now she has descended
the long slopes and crept the
bridges of time
and has arrived solemn
and surrendered at her delta

she is lazy silt enticed
beneath her tide of reassurance
she is a plucked flower in the musk arms
of her absolute love

and she is naked

in sunlight.

Copyright © 2009 by Jaiya John
December 5 draft
jaiyajohn.com
Inspired by the movie, *Lemon Tree*.
Written in the first snowfall of the season.