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Israel

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Israel

I.

The stone reflects the heat
the suns that beat down
and divide.

We come to stare
and absorb the stares of millions
that have believed before the candles
are lit and reused and we descend
once more into the burning sun
in search of a place more sacred,
stones cooler to the touch and a song
that will echo to the back and off the walls
and reach us again, still whole.

II.

We scrape steel coils cut from
the frame into buckets that will
be removed and emptied.
The steel jars people and
the pain resonates as the bar strikes
skulls again and again, without the
artistry to stop.

III.

A stone battered by the sand,
tumbling back to meet the sea
cannot breathe, immersed in the waters
of its abuser, rolling with the punches.
When I take it out of my pocket,
dried, the fluorescent light and kitchen
sink drain the rock bare. I usually
leave stones now, after picking them up
and turning them over and wondering
at the peace inside, that I cannot
take hold of by cracking them open.

IV.

Stealing land, the thick bar lands on the ground
in a sea of dirt that swims around as we cough

What's Keeping Us Together

V.

We are recoiling, building on land where we
were rolled to the ground and it is crazy,
this attachment to the razor rocks that cut
through to the past and let us see
the way we once were, the people
that we can build with peaceful stones,
not clanging steel that hurts our ears
as we clutch at our chests and hit
the ground, rusty and dusty
and already dead.

—Bekah Taylor '00