



II.

the day you touched me and i curled back *like the half curled frond of the fiddlehead fern in forests* and i couldn't tell you baby i couldn't tell you my fear not of you not your liquid energy not your succulent sweet blackberry wine

the day we had the fight at the farm about all the material *things* there and i remember the rage most the unleashing the fear that maybe it wasn't okay to feel it to express it all maybe that wasn't allowed but off we went through the fire and we came through cleansed and free and unburned

the day we gave that workshop for those WASPS, yet again put our faces to their fears, and i was to speak and all the dead. choked screams scarring my insides, and i curled away from the swarm into your gathering eyes, sputtering  
*I am a Jew, I am a lesbian*  
and no one pointed a finger, no one said *pick her, burn her* and we stood tall, touching

the day you showed me the criss-cross scars on your ankles  
and (i never told you) my first foolish urge to kneel down and kiss them/"better"

that was the day you taught me memories don't have to be so clear  
that the panic feeling the loss of breath the sore throat stuck jaw dead neck are

III.

i dream your drum  
talking  
my sax singing

now i try to play alone  
and my fingers flub i forget what i know  
feet halfway off the ground bound for nowhere

*(she lost her step)*

And I pull myself back gently from a faraway place  
nowhere, catch my fugitive glazed eye, hold  
steady my chattering hands, smooth  
my windswirled hair, and set  
myself down here in this space to  
say I love you I miss you I thank you

*what a magic trick!  
cutting your dreadlocks opening up  
then weaving them back in  
with your sorrowsweet heart and  
now cut open again  
blackberry blossom*

*Rachel Zolf's work has been published in Tessera, Prairie Fire, and Fireweed. She has recently been awarded a Canada Council Explorations grant, and will soon begin working on her first book of poetry on a full-time basis.*