

For Etel

1.

etched like a scar naming all my trouble:

TAKE LIBERTY

Liquid. Fluid. Tear. Tears. To secrete.

Secret. Secrets. If you're male blood  
is secret until your skin is cut.

How then, in this condition, to  
get outside what's in. Cry.

Let tears flow like blood.

2.

Like I'd never felt my arm before,  
made of hair, skin, tissue, bone,  
moving in air —

like a debt brought back I  
actually see you move from  
outside in & back again:

MAGIC

untouched untouchable our lives spinning  
in time like sand again & again, again & again

WHAT gain, I beseech thee, intellect,  
what use to me — legs, feet, head?  
If I weep does blood come out?

Tear up the pages of this infernal  
book, look into the darkest recesses  
lit by the charge within

by the charge within  
the mind gallops past  
the charge of any steed  
the speed of oppressive habit  
beating down familiar roads  
beating a relentless pace the  
pulse can never overtake:

we outrun the tide  
beat the odds flying  
in the mind the  
makeshift days  
that leave us cold  
bereft of touch in  
love with sun unable  
to perform as one or two  
or all the many we might become

Ammiel Alcalay  
2011