JENNIFER VAN ALSTYNE

Punchao

I am born of fire or earth,
Each will suffocate or scorch each other,
Porous or gas.
I am born of the hot country
Where Inti lives
With his own type of court
Held high in these mountains.
When Inti is happy the rains come
Hot suns bring water,
Raise maize.
A woman in my bloodline, aqllakuna,
Chosen for weaving
Wills me into existence
I am born of fire or earth.
Taken

Sometimes I sprout wings,
Glide up dunes,
Twirl juniper branches to bramble.

I fly to nightline sky and
Finger starlight.

God can’t find me in this
Pagan glow of long set sun,

Glass chiffon tendrils
Clung to limbs
Tight from thick air,
Wet with
Sea salt slickness.

Dark is for fairylights,
Deep from oak hearth

We rise, circle in seagrass meadow,
Crush bayberries beneath feet
Bare and thorned.

Each night we map coastline,
Shift tide to kiss earth,
Pull sandcastles to sleep,
Palm moonlight.