

## What Counts

Some days  
life crumples you  
folds you  
in on yourself  
pulls you  
inside out  
leaves you raw  
Some days  
the puddles  
seep through  
your boots  
the coffee burns  
the bad news  
comes in torrents  
Some days  
you are foggy  
with grief  
dazed and confused  
thoroughly fallible  
On such days  
there is only  
one question:  
How many ways  
can you  
sing your praises?  
And if  
you can  
stay with  
that question,  
follow it with  
how many ways  
can you  
count to ten?  
And how many ways  
can you count on community  
to pull (you) through?  
How many ways  
can you count  
your blessings?



*Blessing* by Brona Wingell

## **Dirt Medicine**

We, the fossil fuel-addicted,  
gather:  
AA circles of the present  
include true confessions of grief  
for lost land and

wayward soil,  
disconnection from earth  
and mourning  
the changing ecology  
*cars, cars, cars,*  
and *where did all*  
*those trees go?*  
Sunshine resting  
on the backs  
of armchairs  
encircling such  
sadness shared  
*Let them eat*  
*the future*  
Wendell Berry writes  
But with  
no memory of community  
among the 20-somethings,  
is the future here  
now?  
Moving  
into guilt  
limits  
language  
*reclamation, revolution*  
and my mind  
hearing the offered answer  
*less, less, less,*  
shouts back  
*more, more more!*  
of the pluriverse  
diversity  
multiplicity  
complexity  
I am  
holding tenderly  
my friends  
the milpa farmers  
the mud-bathed paddy planters  
the sukuma wiki sorceresses  
in shanty towns and slums  
and high rises and huts

in countrysides and downtowns,  
heart steadfastly beating  
in solidarity with  
peasants, taxi drivers,  
CEOs, agrarian royalty,  
indigenous, immigrant,  
settled, unsettled, resettling,  
creatures, lives, people  
worlds away,  
across the street,  
underfoot.  
If I were  
to relinquish,  
focusing even less  
on the practice  
and letting go of the theory,  
the world would  
continue  
to breathe me,  
at least until that time  
my body passes  
back through the land—  
the phase of rest and change  
these molecules know best.  
Until then, the land  
continues passing through  
my body, while I:  
monitor the stripmining  
of its sources of nourishment,  
knowing intimately the effects of  
*bread more obscene  
than our movies*  
learn the call  
and answer  
slogans of the struggle  
for liberty, community,  
land and life  
sit in circles  
with new friends  
reveal myself in earnest  
hope and  
loving curiosity

somehow still believing  
—a magical secret  
scorching through my pocket—  
that the answers  
are not  
as valuable  
as the questions  
walk in mindfulness and quiet  
contemplation  
swelling full to  
teary-eyed brimfuls  
with the scent of pine  
cooked by sun  
fall to my knees  
catching the sight  
over my own shoulder  
of dried wind-dancing  
flower spines embroidering  
the rolling field  
let myself be  
fully embraced  
in the lap  
mother earth provides  
drink in  
late April brilliance  
of awakening life—  
squabbling crows in counterpoint  
to windchime birdsong—  
supported by rich  
dark soils, sharp  
green cedar sparkling  
on my tongue,  
sky so blue  
it cracks the  
winter exoskeleton  
clean off,  
welcoming me back,  
here,  
*home, home, home.*

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