

POETRY

Returns

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The earth asks for my return:
 Body lines settle softly,
 A butter pat left by the stove.
 I am, in fragments
 Replaced by the air I breathe,
 The apples I ate.
 Unfair trade is assured;
 Pieces of me get left behind.
 After the babies departed my belly,
 The once-thick hair, a banana
 In its ponytail elastic,
 Fell in black torrents.
 Where did I leave the placentas
 And the nail clippings
 And the spit?
 My bones are in cycle;
 A daily disintegration
 And faulty restoration
 That is running out of bricks
 And mortar, though I consume
 Rations of minerals
 Like a good girl.
 The earth is asking for me
 And I am docile in the descent.
 The time for raging against
 Gravity is past; I'm off
 The apogee and sliding.
 I look to the water, the soil –
 I will be there soon enough,
 Everywhere and nowhere
 In the gingko leaves
 Of the great front-yard tree
 And the East River by which I learned
 To shred a cadaver so delicately
 With blunt scissors.

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