

WHITE SANDS

White.
White beyond white.
The white heart
Of the white sun.
White heat.
White of bone.
White of seed.
White before white.
White within white.
The white of men
White in their power,
The white that defies death,
The white that is death.
White the altar of war.
White its heart.
White its soul.

White the house of war.
White the Vatican of war
Mea culpa (repeat)
Forgive me,
Fathermother,
For I have sinned.
Cleanse me
With the pure white
Sand of war.

And quiet.
Forgive me with quiet,
Quiet so loud
It fathers unforgiving-
The quiet of temples,
Of synagogues and sepulchers,
The quiet of silence,
The quiet that mothers suffering,
The quiet beyond sand,
The quiet echoing the rumor of war.

White the Christianity of war,
White the Judaism of war,
White the Mohammedanism of war.
White the government of war.
White the Bible of sand.

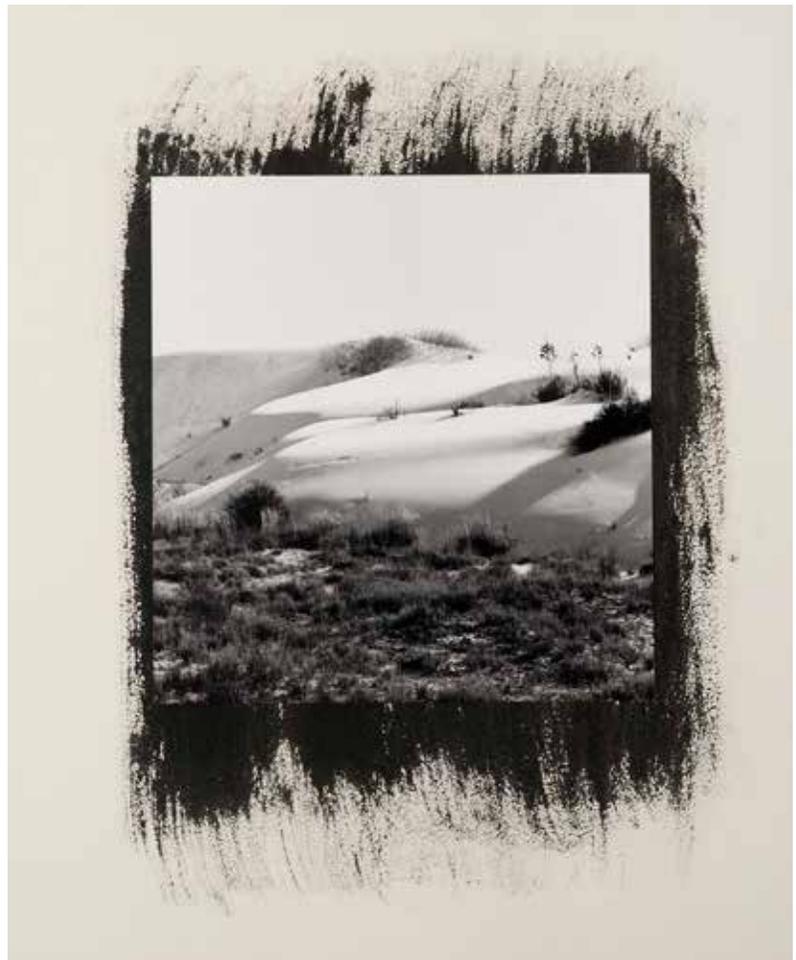
And change,
White the change
That knows no change.
Sand in its sameness.
This white sand river
Forever on the move:
North or South.
White moving East;
White moving West.
Circling.
Rising.
Drifting back to whiteness.
Wind beginning
Already to erase
Even its own moving.
Each white footprint
Falling in upon itself,
Erasing any trace of you,
Any trace that you
Were ever here.
You-
Or anyone like you.

Sand.
Pray for sand.
Pray for the divinity of sand,
For white sand,
For the inhumanity of sand.
Condemn us
In the sand of war.
Bathe us in sand.
Baptize us in sand.
In sand will we be forgiven.
Forever and ever
Amen.
White sand,
Unreal sand.
Sand that gives,
And sand that takes.
Listen:
Here is the voice of sand,
Whispering in whiteness-
White sound
So close.
White so close to the machine.

Black jets
With the heaviness
Of statehood
Cleave the canyons of sand
Like furious birds.

Remember sand
Sand so close to the memory,
To Ground Zero,
To the practice run:
Big Boy
Little Boy
Any Boy.
U-235.
Plutonium.
All within walking distance.
Who can say
What the sand saw.
Listen:
This is the poetry
Of plutonium.
Blessed is Pu-244,
Born of destruction,
Of neutron bombardment-
Half-life: 76 million yrs.
Blessed is Pu-239,
Fissionable isotope
Slipping slowly
Into the marrow
Of your white bones.
Forever.
Whispering to you,
Reading you
Your rights.
You have the right-
You have the right to-
You have the right to forget.

Remember
First and foremost
Remember
Your right to bear arms.
The right to bear arms
Is power.



In power is death
In all its whiteness.
In power is exploitation.
In power is taking-
Without asking,
Without praying.
In power is forgetting.

Forgetting to remember
Hiroshima
August 6, 1945.
Forgetting to remember
Nagasaki
August 9, 1945.
Remember this sand;
Remember this silence.

Remember this:
You do not need to know
The composition of blood
To know truth.
You need only know
That sand moves slower
And lasts longer.