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## Inadequate, Essential Gestures

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## INADEQUATE, ESSENTIAL GESTURES

*Sharon K. Hom*

Somewhere

A young girl is  
repeatedly raped  
by soldiers in a forest clearing  
throughout the afternoon's violations

She sings

hymns prayers  
for mercy for peace for the end  
that finally comes as machetes  
silence her singing  
still echoing

Somewhere

the last 650 mountain gorillas  
helpless as the circle  
of poachers, soldiers closes in  
their eyes on the trophy-heads and hands  
gentle meat of human food  
nowhere to hide  
in a bleeding land

Somewhere

A bitter widow  
hangs a starved bruised dog  
casualties of retreating para-military violence  
*justice for justice*  
*she intones under her breath*

Here, now

after the floods and hurricane winds  
against the harsh sunlight  
I patiently brush Bo-Bo and Ulysses  
distant cousins of the dying  
kit foxes, Bengali tigers, sleek panthers  
I clean my house  
wash the laundry  
write my checks

to save the diminishing pieces  
of the world that remain

Here, still  
Noboku sings  
    filling the emptiness  
    drawing me into  
    a circle  
    a circle of all relations  
reminding me  
that *a single stone*  
*ripples far*  
*far out beyond*

Here, still  
across impoverished  
barbed wire borders  
    re-presenting our clients  
    we petition for human scraps  
    at the immigration table  
claiming an as yet  
unimagined citizenship

*Not such stuff as dreams are made of*

Only  
    the inadequate  
    essential gestures  
    of a life