

Story for performance #543  
webcast from Sydney at 08:02PM, 15 Dec 06



Source: Reuters, 'Israeli PM caught prodding Prodi', *The Age online*, 15/12/06.  
Tags: [intimacy](#)  
Writer/s: [Jacqui Shine](#)

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I am waiting for you to speak. I am waiting for you to respond. In the hook between our voices I have hung everything I have. I have turned out my pockets onto the table of the sad silence between us, an offering. Between each heartbeat, yours and mine, alternating and converging in a staccato symphony, I am waiting for you to say something. I am ready to hear anything, so afraid am I that you will say nothing.

I am waiting for your answer, steeled and recoiled against an affirmation or for a challenge, ready for your heart or for your heartbreak. In this moment I feel as though I have been waiting all my life. In this moment I feel as though I have lived my whole life, each breath has been measured out with a tablespoon and dumped carelessly aside.

I am waiting for you to speak, and I am trying to read each breath like some kind of Braille, each inhale a portent of what might come, each exhale followed with some stuttered syllable. Unreadable, always, and yet always I try.

I am waiting for your answer. I am grasping through this terrible silence like some perpetual darkness, our lives reduced to formless masses, stumbling hazards, emitting no light but gathering no shadow. This darkness renders me immobile, invisible, and when my grasping hands

graze your form we are both startled.

I am waiting for you to speak. I am ready for any answer, but all that means is that I am prepared to be ruined. An expectation is not the same as a desire. Smothered by silence, I am still moved by terrible fear and fearsome hope. Staggering under the weight of your immovable heart, my pockets full of stones, I walk into the water anyway.

I am waiting for you to respond, and every energy wills your answer. Until this moment, I have never needed my pulsing blood to be anything other than its own endless river, but now I want the current to carry my heart to yours. Adrift, I want to will the press of the water and of my blood to carry me beyond this moment, to find you safely on the other side.

I am waiting for you to speak. I am waiting for you to see what my broken voice showed you, for your blindness to turn as a passing storm does. This darkness, this sadness, this silence—each could disperse, dispel, and each needs only your answer. I see it straining under your breathing skin. Release it. Please. Please say this. I am waiting. Please.

*Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Jacqui Shine.*