

## Four Poems

Izabel Brandão  
Translated by Terry Gifford



### Earth Twins

I'm not like you,  
my twin.  
Our breathing blood  
was spilt in the wind  
that split your soul from mine.

Open your mouth, my twin,  
give me the kiss of life  
that feeds with warmth  
the frail breath  
of my soul without yours.

Despite our differences,  
my twin,  
we can intertwine our fingers  
and our hope in the dream  
that finally unites us.

The earth that cradles my sleep  
will become clay tomorrow  
and you blended with me  
will become the warm water  
that shapes our joined souls.

The sun and wind will slowly  
soothe our sorrows  
and, more than twins,  
we will become seeds  
ready for sowing.

Izabel Brandão, *Espiral de fogo* (Maceió: Edufal, 1998)

### What Men Seek

It is hard to think of men  
seeking their mothers  
for something more  
than the comfort of their laps.

Men seek  
always their fathers  
for the strong knife  
that empowers labour

like Heaney in Ireland  
seeking from his father and grandfather  
the spade that digs  
for the food and the poem.

Now women seek  
but do not always find  
roots that strengthen their lives  
more than their mothers'

to become mothers of ideas,  
or of musical seeds, singing  
as though sifting gold  
in the sun.

Izabel Brandão, *Ilha de olhos e espelhos* (Maceió: Edufal, 2003)

## Autobiography

*for Dona Bela*  
*ready-made seasoning is for lazy women ...*  
*I am one of them*

My cooker is the computer  
my books the cooking pots  
my pens are spoons  
and my plates the papers where I've cooked

poems  
essays  
and the daily recipes  
that I forgot to write

Izabel Brandão, *As horas da minha alegria*  
(Ilha de Santa Catarina: Editora Mulheres: 2013)

### **The Last Harbour**

From the window the sea is green and beautiful.  
It rains and the sun shines on the foundered ship.

Going away is simply useless  
for the other side of the looking glass is here.

The pomegranates are still green  
And the seeds have no flavour yet.

I've found that I have to stay.  
The sentence has not yet expired.

But now I see the sea without a shipwreck.  
I've got your iridescent shell  
and take possession of the window.

This sea is mine.  
The city too.

Izabel Brandão, *As horas da minha alegria*  
(Ilha de Santa Catarina: Editora Mulheres: 2013)