

*Marlene Hanna*

**Quicksand**

—October 12, 2002: Bali

Her mouth grew wide  
To suck all the air out of this world,  
And with her breath  
To birth another.  
A world where her daughter was still alive.

She did not aim back in time.  
Before terrorist bombs blew the children to pieces.  
But faced forward where warm wet sand never sucks you down  
into its sharp indifference.

But the thought of her child  
Changed the face of the sand.  
As crystal slivers slashed straight at her body and cancelled her mind.  
She smashed critical into its ice mud womb.  
She stopped.

Until she remembered her daughter.  
Remembered to breathe.  
To suck all the air out of this world.  
And with her breath to birth another.  
A world where her daughter is still alive.

**Marlene Hanna** is an artist and philosopher. She lives in Boston, Massachusetts.