

Power By Adrienne Rich

Living in the earth-deposits of our history

Today a backhoe divulged out of a crumbling flank of earth
one bottle amber perfect a hundred-year-old
cure for fever or melancholy a tonic
for living on this earth in the winters of this climate.

Today I was reading about Marie Curie:

she must have known she suffered from radiation sickness
her body bombarded for years by the element
she had purified

It seems she denied to the end

the source of the cataracts on her eyes

the cracked and suppurating skin of her finger-ends
till she could no longer hold a test-tube or a pencil

She died a famous woman denying

her wounds

denying

her wounds came from the same source as her power.