

The Storm Inside a Woman

No one told me
my body
was an earthquake,
my body's
a hurricane,
tornado.
That my body
was and will always be
the eye of the storm.

They only told me
that I was a woman,
that I was to be
placid as a lake —
yet how can I be
human if I never
thunder, if I never rain?

I am wind
and I am hail
just as I am flesh
and I am blood.

This lake will stir.
This lake will flood.
And when it's placid,
it will hypnotize.

— Christine Sloan Stoddard,
from *Belladonna Magic: Spells in the Form
of Poetry and Photography* (Shanti Arts, 2019)



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