volunteers came over the sand dunes seeking blistered dark mounds that lay on the land in a shallow rush of surf. And life leaking undone in crushed lungs, skin had turned grey but they laved and nursed and got them away.

SONG FOR A GIRL
(a palimpsest for John Dryden)

Young I am walking in an orchard of maturing fruits and see a lover yield. How to keep these images of green shade? I believe this taught me when to feign.

Take me from these dry wheatlands to forest where trees grow young and true till I need recall no more those bodies jerk in dust; roll of eyes.

Stay not till knuckles ring hollow on the water tank’s lowest rungs and to betray he that has sired you and your kin; to stay longer would be to deceive the rest.

Could I find fresh water to replace dust-brimmed teacups? And full of truth, brisk, and of sound mind and body, shed the mire of years; again to be fifteen?