

Under the Act

by Susanna Rance

You might say I tried
not to cause your life to spark,
but spark it did, it did.

Size of a fingernail
says my mother, showing hers –
to me, you're bigger than the moon.

I walked on that ward
with my own two feet.
Metal took out my deepest core.

After, I screamed the ward down,
parents chased out, screens pulled round.
Voice made things move.

In my dream life
I screamed before, before,
holding you dear.

Waking to the void,
all I knew, all I still know:
right to choose, my right to choose.

Susanna Rance is a writer and academic living between London, UK and La Paz, Bolivia. A sociologist, she received her PhD from Trinity College, Dublin (2003) with a thesis on Bolivian doctors' changing voices and practices regarding abortion and women hospitalised with complications of abortion and pregnancy loss. Since her teens, Susanna has been a feminist and activist on issues of gender and sexual and reproductive health and rights. She participated as member of Bolivian governmental and NGO delegations in the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development and related events in the Latin American region. Susanna has published widely in English and Spanish on topics including abortion technologies, post-abortion care, women's birthplace choices, users' experiences in hospital emergency services, research ethics, rights advocacy, and qualitative research methods. She is an honorary visiting reader with the University of East London in Stratford, UK.