CLAWS TEAR ME

SUSAN HASS
University of British Columbia

In this practice of open learning, a giant claw retracts from my chest. A peace swells there now, and the gently tugging impatient new. Little waves lap where claws dug, dedicated, persistent, nuzzling and licking, cajoling healing.

Claws cannot access to tear or to puncture what shapes into something improbably soft.

How can teachers bring this gentleness, identified like a scent, held dear to me, to someone else?

How could I participate in retracting and drawing out huge claws from the chests of others, held tightly tense there for what must be years?

As a bee needs a flower...
Even relentless sharpnesses,

How can teachers talk about healing?

Is it conversant, made better through sunshine and oxygen, the curious and concerned looks in other creatures’ faces?

Inexplicable-
The size of a human hand has been lifted.

Curiosities and solaces are desperately needed, like for a seal pup, a sound of its mother.

Guarding, against,

Are these claws tearing tissues open things to be thankful for? Grateful?

solaces
soft
desperately needed
a seal pup
sunshine, oxygen
the comfort of claws