

# VOX HUMANA



Adebe DeRango-Adem

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POEMS

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Book\*hug Press acknowledges that the land on which we operate is the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. We recognize the enduring presence of many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and are grateful for the opportunity to meet, work, and learn on this territory.

## Book\*hug Press



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As all the Heavens were a Bell,

And Being, but an Ear,

And I, and Silence, some strange Race

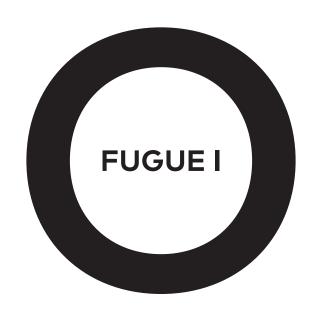
Wrecked, solitary, here –

—Emily Dickinson ("I felt a Funeral, in my Brain")

if you wd have me speak
you must learn the tongue of my dead & loved ones
i have been left behind
a survivor
holdin out for more
—Ntozake Shange ("for my dead & loved ones")

vox vōcis, f. (connected with voco), a voice, cry, call.

- (1) of things, sound, tone;
- (2) a thing said with the voice, a saying, utterance, formula, magic incantation.



### inspire (v.)

mid-14c., enspiren, "to fill (the mind, heart, etc., with grace, etc.)"; also "to prompt or induce (someone to do something)," from Old French enspirer (13c.), from Latin inspirare "blow into, breathe upon," figuratively "inspire, excite, inflame," from in- "in" (from PIE root \*en "in") + spirare "to breathe" (see spirit (n.)). The Latin word was used as a loan-translation of Greek pnein in the Bible. General sense of "influence or animate with an idea or purpose" is from late 14c. Also sometimes used in literal sense in Middle English. Related: Inspires; inspiring

TO BUILD OUT OF NECESSITY out of this hissssssss / muffled) grrrr-gle (stifledfor a worthier world cry for a body tenacious & not so out of breath to build out of survival's ruins. lingua a langue "in other words" a long line of echoes / lineages fighting for auricular coherence & yet a type of peace when you hear that unmistakable key / of variegated & unenglish sounds received in the ears jewels as / small prisms abstracted from the heavy peninsulas we slipped / from we didn't land to craft some humdrum idiom from some *ho-hum* lips this is / a script a will to reach chest-first

voluminous

nest of glimmering

into the wise

verbs / to will the word

per word

story of

what comes next

but first to recant what preceded

what was lost

/ be(come) witness

to a new metrics

that renews

& renames you

says you

matter says to you on the down lo of yo self-self / lo

& behold

even when you are forcedintothemarginalia
/ you are building yourself

an exit

out of the domain of unsaid

things

/to declare & round

them

up one by one

until they form a makeshift drum

/ beating beating in the jewel

of your ear

familiar yet emergent

present

/ yet yet

(to go bold into the / yet to be

heard of

is the only home

I've known)