

by Elana Wolff
BOLLS

Driving home on Bathurst Street
I see a sudden cotton tree
and understand they also grow in cold

in lion-hearted March in Spartan-yards.
Formed from slim deciduous limbs
whose lingering leaves
get masked
to bolls
that won't become designer clothes or batting.

But little fists
that power me to Israel and Egypt where
the cotton boils on bushes
in its actual abode.

There's this image I have of stomping on cotton
in a chain-link
bin in
a field
near Ein Harod.

Alone in the heat for long enough
I dare to take my t-shirt off.

I stand there sweating
gaping
at my naked cotton bra.

The bolls beneath my feet are pliant fibre:
I'm pariah white
and strafed with blood
from scrapes with bracts and burs.