



When the Language Was Young

– for *When The Language Was Young*, 2010 (lithograph on yupo) by James Nares

When our language was young
we could say things with finger-painted hands and no
words, with a smooch
as big as an apple
to a hungry cheek, and with spontaneous
crisscrossed chalk marks in the street.

When our language was young it spilled
without hesitation, slapped,
splashed, splattered
vibrant red, perfect
in its imperfection, its
sticky fingers and soiled
smocks. We didn't know any better

when our language was young
than to run
all over the place with dripping,
blooming marks

staining every
ready surface.