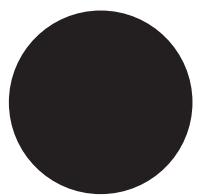


dark



moon

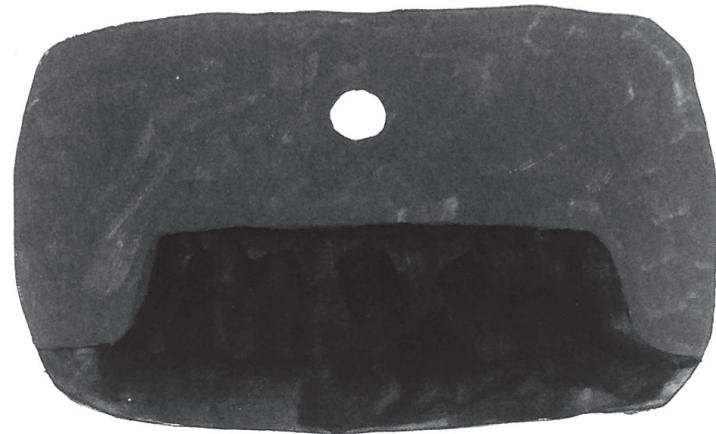
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the movements of the moon can be imagined like a plant cycle. the new moon is when the planted seed begins to stir, the full moon is the opening of the bud, and the moment before new moon, the dark moon phase, is when the plant decays and returns to the earth.

culturally, we are afraid of the dark. we are afraid to let things die. we have little space for lethargy, despair, and destruction. this zine is a collection of prose & poems about the transformational power of pain, both personal and collective. it is an attempt to renew.

with love,

c



30.08.19

new moon in virgo

i set the intention to show the vision
given to me by the divine.

Unfortunately, we are the inheritors of atrocities. Our systems are such that we commit crimes by accident, without the intention of harm, every time we move through space, or clothe ourselves, or feed ourselves. The conditions of our lives make us imperfect actors, out of alignment with the cosmos.

Our project, our imperative is to bring ourselves back into alignment. We all have a sense for what is true and good. We are receptors for love. Love can be obfuscated, but we know it when we see it. We trust that love is the currency of the universe.

We are small. We know some things and have forgotten much else. Some things can be recovered, some things can be remade. Some things are gone forever and that's the way it is.

If we work from the principle of love, we can't help but be connected. We are parts of wholes, and wholes made of parts. The destruction we inherit comes from forgetting this. If we fail to see our relatedness, we withhold love, which is harm.

In relation there is no supremacy. In relation we dismantle the putrid structures which are our birthright. We refuse an inheritance of violence through love expressed by connection.

Sadly our brokenness is very profound. The answer to brokenness is not self-flagellation or penance, but healing. Healing is the process of making right. Healing is also an embedded quality in the universe, in our bodies, in the land; we should be confident in our capacity for rectification.

Whatever connections have been severed can be regrown.

THE LOVERS

Gemini

Synthesis. Combining elements of head and heart, feeling and intellect. The union of what is divine in us and in the universe. The coming together of opposites. Thinking about relationship. Working with a partner or in preparation for partnership. Your relationships are mirroring your own inner sense of worth; how you feel about yourself can be seen in how your partner relates to you. Choice between security and a risk of some kind, or between the old and the new. Choice between something respectable but dull and something greatly desired but morally improper. Responsibility. Taking responsibility for your choices and actions. Using free will. Freedom from inhibitions, guilt, conditioning, bondages. Love that can exist only in the absence of restrictions. Recognition of duality. Balanced decisions that require your conscious and subconscious minds to be in agreement. Involvement in a process of cooperation. Recognition of masculine and feminine characteristics in self and others. Need to integrate them within yourself.

— from Tarot For Yourself

08.08.19

We saw the Medicine Wheel on the Big Horn Mountains. The ranger was very cute. It was clearly a sacred place, with offerings of sage, tobacco, feathers, and bones.

I cried behind the gas station store. Two workers came to check on me to see “if there was anything medically wrong.” Then they showed me a baby bat tucked behind a pipe.

06.09.19

And I know I came back from Grandma’s shiney and fresh, squeaky clean, gentle like a lamb. What makes me turn sour?

I think my wounds get easily irritated or infected. Sometimes there is no pause for reflection, the gate is open, the dogs are loose.

11.09.19

He wanted me to buck up and be strong. I told him I couldn’t solve this in the course of a phone conversation.

Of course, there were things I did wrong, things that were not executed perfectly. I left a lot of shit in Max’s bedroom. I wept. I was unreachable.

09.08.19

*And I see pain F
on the horizon Am
looming large F7
like a buffalo C*

*I feel estranged
I feel divided
I can't see
what I don't know*

*My heart is open
my mind is firm
but I'm still afraid
and I still yearn*

*to be united
with the great One
coming fast
like the setting sun*



11.08.19

Our third night in the Black Hills. Bright moon tonight.

We came to this site yesterday afternoon after going to the Crazy Horse Memorial. We watched a Lakota woman named Star perform hoop dancing.

Now we listen to nighthawks “peet” and whoosh like a truck stopping.

After finding a campsite we took mushrooms. We made a small ritual and set an intention to learn what we could from this sacred land. I wanted to dose higher than usual. The mushrooms were strong.

We spent the first part of the trip exploring near us, coming to a ridge with good views of the hills. We prowled around looking at rocks and trees. I tried to be considerate and listen. I felt a mounting anxiety but it was manageable.

We had a small mission to go to the only aspens we could see (most trees here are Ponderosa pines). We had to go down into wet brush. When we reached the aspens I was uncomfortable. I wanted to [?] myself to the mushrooms. I wanted to trust my intuition. So after the aspens I made a beeline for the ridge again. A light rain was falling.

On the ridge we spent some time looking at the sky and landscape. We could hear thunder and watch lightning move through the hills. The sky and light was incredible, bright sun and gray sky, high-contrast ponderosas. We saw a series of rainbows.

I was getting wet and cold and trying to fight it, or trying to surrender to it. I wanted to rely on the landscape.

I thought of the people I loved. I felt so incapacitated and helpless. I thought about Kevin caring for me, needing to be cared for. I needed to be cared for so badly.

I was completely fetal in a blanket, trying to stay warm. The only part of my body exposed was my head. I asked Kevin to rub my head and he did. I felt a lot of tension release from my body. The tenderness of it made me cry.

I felt very bad about being a “nugget,” being so small and feeble. I thought about Castaneda’s “living like a warrior” and I felt I was failing miserably, immersed in my own emotions, not taking responsibility for myself. On the other hand, I felt like I was straining and fighting so hard. What was I fighting? Why was I taking on so much? Why couldn’t I surrender?

Eventually Kevin coaxed me out to greet the night. There was a thick fog, and it was a very gray twilight. We watched the lightning looking soft through the mist.

I was unsteady on my feet. I was barefoot. I leaned on Kevin. We hugged. His touch was very soothing, and his body was warm. I thought of all my techniques for warming myself. I shook but I knew it wouldn’t work. Against Kevin I felt safe, embryonic.

We reentered the tent and it started to rain. I kneeled and thought of the intention of the trip, of the land. I thought, if I can’t do anything else, I can pray. I closed my eyes and prayed to the Earth, and my prayers went down, down, down to the core.

The thunder intensified. I had curled up again and saw myself as some creature, a rodent baby huddling against the elements. The thunder was multidimensional, bouncing off the hills. There was a very bright flash of lightning and an enormous boom of thunder which shook us. Here were the Lakota Thunder Beings. They made themselves known. “Do not fuck around.”

The thunder scared me but I was basically sub-human, a creature clinging for warmth. The storm raged on for hours and we were still awake, tripping. We had taken the mushrooms around 4 and didn’t quiet down til 11.

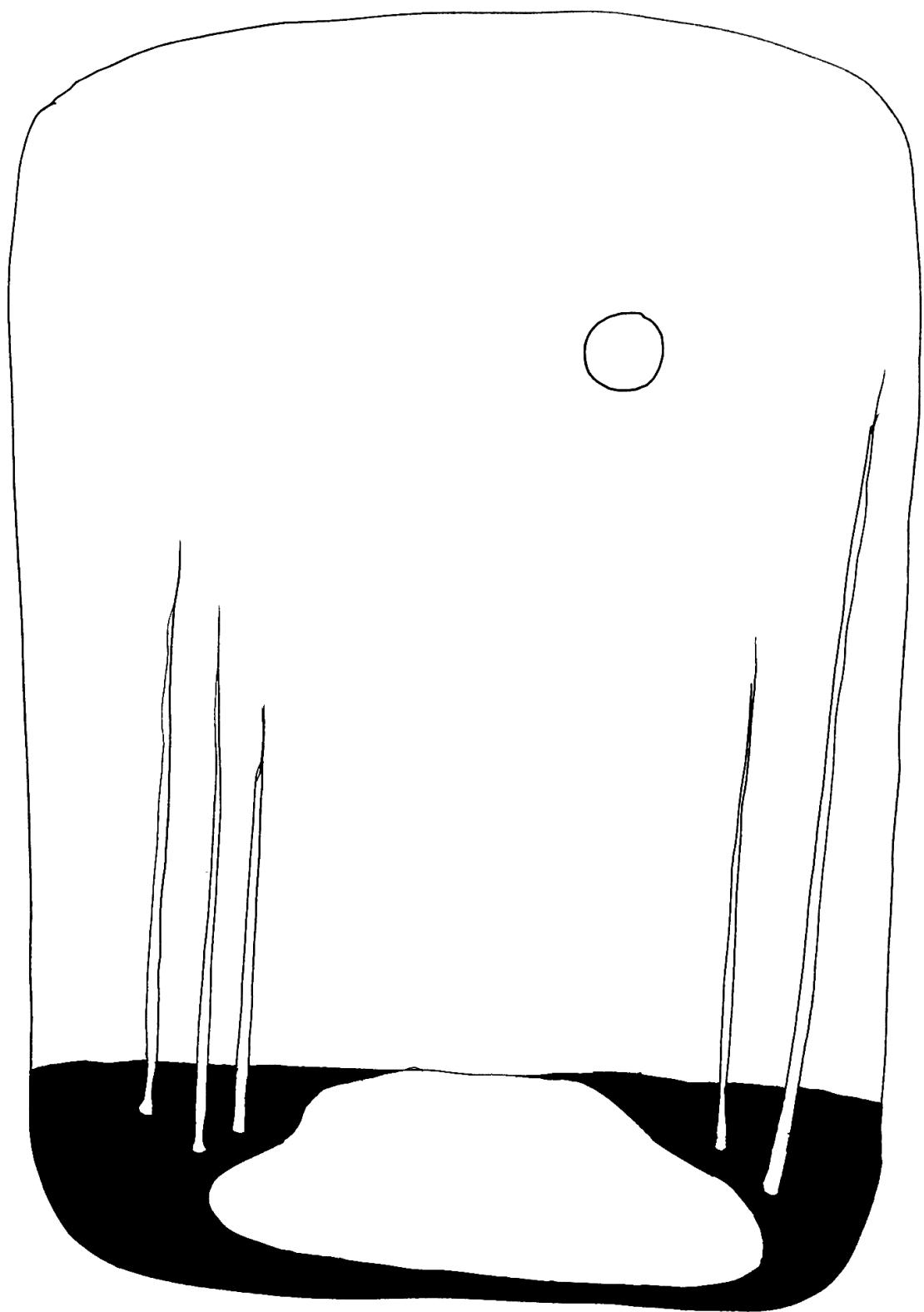
05.09.19

[continued from trip report]

We ate an apple on the balcony (the one I’d put on the altar for the new moon).

In the evening the weather turned.

This is the Tarot year of the Lovers for me, and by extension, the Devil.



04.12.19

16.11.19

The girls I was with offered me Joss seeds, which were supposed to have an effect like cocaine. They were black, small, glittering. I woke before I could decide if I would take them.

(but a small voice says, can you sustain this? Where's the shoe drop, the inevitable crash?). I feel the need to ask the cards or ask from on high because I can't see through. I can see what I want and I can trust the gold coin on the outstretched hand. But the next stepping stone is a little clouded,

The light comes into the room, brightening, and I switch off the lamps, it's 8:56.

I remember the reading I got at Raven's Wing last summer and the rhythm with which the reader drew cards, flipping them quickly on the table.

Vision at the lake on Lord Siva's weed. I allow myself to be intoxicated in the darkness of the season. I curl up and burrow like a small forest rodent. The lake stretched gray except for the floating punctuation of white swans, clouds. The high reeds were dead for the season, but the marsh remains.

I thought of the project of knowing this land and now see it as increasing acquaintance with the Dark Goddess, whom I did not know before returning to the old world, and more blurrily the world of my ancestors (with major caveats — I don't think I have any ancestors in Brandenburg. Or maybe I do and this is how they make themselves known to me, through the certainty of the Dark Goddess).

I feel I am starting to see the old world through the eyes of Av, who is enamored with folklore and plant manuals. Perhaps there is a German one translated into English. But I'll take the intuitive route too, standing among dead reeds.

In the gloom of the day in these woods on this lake the presence of the Crone Goddess is irrefutable. I felt the earth, the feeling of wind, closed my eyes and plunged my

feet into the soil, and listened with my body. The forest was here. Beneath me I could feel the network of mycelium, entering this place of connectedness, which dissolved into stars, the cloudy cosmos of the void. I remembered the vision at Hrdaya of Kali, who is none other than the Dark Goddess. She had reached for me then, portending to now.

I felt for any fear in myself and found some. It was the animal fear of the Black Hills mushroom trip and the throbbing pain of depression. The fear of consumption. It's the fear of the Devil I can't help. This fear is karmic and born of circumstance coming of age in a family of God-fearing Christians. Sinners in the hands of an angry god. Who wrote that?

So I surrendered myself to the Devil, to the mycelium more plentiful than stars underfoot. This is trust, this is surrender. I tried to do it with my body, finding the process beyond words, beyond thought. Terrence thinks the universe is constructed of language but if so it's not one I can access through all the tools I grew up with. It's true that there are new tools of communicating with Her, with the Other, that she has been developing in me, in my breath and feet, which are permeable.

At the water I thought of course She is a woman. I understood the ambivalence in myself towards my own body as being an expression of fear of Her. But the kinship of femininity was there too, that certain knowing among us. It's there if we can recover it from the many layers of culture, women's magic. Listening body, herb voices, the green stem line of intuition.

I know what I need to do.

If I trust Her, I trust in what's natural.

I give myself to Her. Kali Ma.

If I trust Her I can be free from fear. I felt it walking back.



*There is nothing to fear here. I am safe and provided for in the arms
of the Goddess who is pure intuition inside of my every cell.*

And I am their sum, also knowing.

There is no strain in trust, just the certainty of being lifted,



the pleasure of being blessed.

The Star card which foretold messages from the trees and water, the woman stooping, pouring, with certainty and knowledge, carrying water — she is me.

THE STAR**Aquarius**

Meditation. Inexhaustable inspiration.

Spiritual regeneration. Using active imagination and visualization. Artistic and scientific inspiration. Formulating your ideals and goals. Examining your hopes for the future. Using systems of self-insight such as astrology, Tarot, numerology etc. Living by your own truth and values rather than those of the outer world. "Freedom is nothing left to lose."

Altruism. Nonconformity. Doing the unexpected. The calm after the storm; release after imprisonment. Freedom.

Nature worship. Solitary rituals. Peace and serenity. Refreshment, renewal, or cleansing. Purification. Baptism. A desire to know the truth, to be open and honest, to communicate with nothing held back.

Frankness. Disclosure or discovery of something. Being involved in actions and projects beneficial to your fellow beings. A desire to participate in the enlightenment and consciousness-raising of all humankind. Being the "star," the center of attention. Public recognition.

Being the leader or spokesperson for others. Stubbornly clinging to fixed ideals.

— from *Tarot For Yourself*

SOLSTICE

dear advait,

it took a while for "the undercommons" to bear fruit for me, like a note forgotten in a coat pocket. it came up in a patchwork of conversations last week. turns out it's what i've been doing with sari-sari. it describes an instinct i had for why gathering, and the facilitating of gathering through space, is important.

i'm more anti as i get older. i find myself, my internal and external person, less palatable to the state, to conventions of gender and sexuality, to corporations. i feel strange on airplanes and in malls, in banks, in nice restaurants in nice neighborhoods, in bureaucracy, in doctor's offices, in the presence of the military or police. i still carry my white entitlement but i'm uncomfortable. i feel like many people have felt their whole lives, though i drifted here, and am still surprised at the occasional hostility or bewilderment in another's face as it meets mine.

anyway, i am conscious of growing difference borne from growing consciousness. last year i decided i would become more sensitive — to sensation, to emotion, to the divine, to suffering. sensitivity is a door hard to close once opened. you can't unsee what you've seen, you can't unfeel what you've felt. i shouldn't be surprised that in inviting empathy i became radicalized. upping your sensitivity lowers your tolerance, for sugar or booze, or injustice. if you decide to see the suffering of others don't be surprised if the state becomes obscene, if the police become a militia, if capital becomes disgusting. i found an ocean of tenderness for many and wrath for those who harm them.

networks of support, like mycelium, are critical to the survival

of the ostracized person. it's not just a party when you're too poor or too gay or too foreign or too black to go to the bar. to the chronically uncomfortable comfort carries more weight. so i found myself becoming a maintainer of space, which is sari-sari. this year i learned the phrase "regenerative culture," which is used by activists to describe post-action after-care, or utopian ideas of what we should be to each other. what we do in sari-sari is perhaps not so linear as "regenerative culture" — we are figuring it out, we're artists and cooks, mostly — but we do hold space for basically anyone who needs it. and we do a lot of hanging out.

there are a couple of moments that resurfaced for me from "the undercommons," but the two clearest bells were a more inclusive definition of "study" and the tyranny of policy. on study:

"We are committed to the idea that study is what you do with other people. It's talking and walking around with other people, working, dancing, suffering, some irreducible convergence of all three, held under the name of speculative practice. The notion of a rehearsal—being in a kind of workshop, playing in a band, in a jam session, or old men sitting on a porch, or people working together in a factory—there are these various modes of activity. The point of calling it "study" is to mark that the incessant and irreversible intellectuality of these activities is already present."

what we do in sari-sari — hanging out, cooking, working, jamming, bitching, and general gathering — is "study," then. it's not simple diversion or simple soothing or simple support or even just regenerative culture. it is all those things AND it is how we are learning together. we are intellectual and building.
do you wonder, maybe as i wonder, how the new world will be built? from what pieces will we salvage the present. what will be the

threads that connect us, that bring us forward.

not long after my 27th birthday i had a clear vision of the future. a voice said that i should be a community builder. so when sari-sari came my way as a more serious project, as something i could reasonably throw my weight behind, i said yes.

of course the voice didn't tell me why community building is important, it just told me to get going, but fred moten seems to know why it's work worth doing.

before i talk about policy, i want to talk about anarchy. this year i learned about direct action, and i learned so much through that, and i was arrested for the first time, and i was deported, though only from a country i had no ties to and didn't care about, not the country i live in, in which i'm also an immigrant, or ex-pat, or tourist, or all three. in my native country the far left is quiet, collected in whispers, though it is louder now as things quicken. anarchist, communist, socialist, eco-terrorist, antifa, and fascism are words i didn't understand because they were discussed in hushed tones or loudly dismissed. it was through the european eco-left that i learned about anarchy, and then through conversations with my partner max and morgane a few others, and i still haven't read a book about it, but i like it. it has the crackling power of witchcraft and agency claimed.

i told my friend amar, i'm learning about anarchy and i think i like it, and he said, well weren't you already an anarchist and i said, in what way? and he said that my work at sari-sari was anarchist, because i was creating what i wanted to see in the world. and what i want to see in the world is not always so clear and specific as policy. it's not neatly quantifiable, not x-number-of-people with jobs or y-number-of-people with a high school

diploma. it will never divide cleanly around race, class, or gender lines, to the extent that these lines divide us. and i think what did policy ever do for me, ever do for anyone, besides shilling out a little of what we were already entitled to. i remember being 18 in washington state and getting a little money off of my birth control i already had to pay out of pocket for because even though i grew up in a rich family the apostle paul created a legacy of celibacy and sexual oppression in the church so i'd better not use their health insurance to fuck.

in a paraphrase of harney & moten, policy aims to break up the undercommons, which is that fugitive "study" we're doing in dancefloor basements and apartment kitchens. policy makes policy for others, denounces others as incorrect. it comes from the top.

"The ones who survive the brutality of mere survival are said by policy to lack vision, to be stuck in an essentialist way of life, and, in the most extreme cases, to be without interests, on the one hand, and incapable of disinterestedness, on the other...
...policy must first deal with the fact that the multitude is already productive for itself. This productive imagination is its genius, its impossible, and nevertheless material, collective head. And this is a problem because plans are afoot, black operations are in effect, and in the undercommons all the organizing is done. The multitude uses every quiet moment, every sundown, every moment of militant preservation, to plan together, to launch, to compose (in) its surreal time."

whether we lack vision because of the exhaustion of survival, or we have vision but it's unproductive to the powers at be, a truth is revealed: we are perfectly capable of knowing what we need. that this idea is so disruptive, that we ourselves would be the authority on ourselves, says a lot about how far we've wandered, how deep

we've sunk, away from simple listening.

sensitivity is listening. the process of sensitization is turning your attention to sensation and giving it some airtime, some credence. allow sensation to inform you. i hear sounds in my ears, clues from my eyes, warmth in the heart and tingle in the spine, and a thousand other things, images that come to my brain on floating water, cold in my feet, and fear too.

today on the solstice i made a resolution to "listen to my body"; i allow my body to inform me, and i give my body credibility. we live in loud times, in a loud world, and i'll admit i've cursed ambulances. the inputs we take in are terrifying to any regular forrest creature; one can hardly imagine how dogs and cats live in our din with hearing orders of magnitude more sensitive than ours. it is hard to be sensitive, and it's hard to listen, and to listen involves inviting a degree of pain because you're not numbing out. we want to numb out.

sensitivity means i am trying not to numb out, at least for a little bit.

and not numbing out is a synonym for taking responsibility for yourself. it means trusting yourself and trusting your own experience as real and worth confronting, worth working with. to be sensitive and to be acting on that sensitivity is to be an anarchist.

i read a great book last month called "apocalyptic witchcraft" which draws that green line perfectly. if you are sensitive to the wanderings of herbs, of fungi, and of creatures of the earth sky and sea—if you are a witch—then you will feel wounded if they are wounded and you will feel angry and you will be ready to act. the practices of witchcraft are the result of listened-to sensation; these

practices are not genuine if they do not include some political outrage. witchcraft cannot be tolerated under the status quo and any proper witch is a radical.

so, as witches we make our own medicine, and we trust our guts, and we know what's best for us. how could anyone but us know what's best for us? and, secondly, who told us that we didn't have all the information?

we have all the information.

i am confident in our ability to make the world we need, because we know exactly what's wrong with this one.

we follow that green line to modes of action. we follow that green line to that plant which comes in dreams. we, i, am shifted with the tides but i'm bringing the tides into my heart, so what did i expect. do not be surprised if you wax and wane when you pray to the moon, that great light of poets, and all unconscious, and the semicolon which connects that single sentence we speak in this life. that was a reference to "madness, rack, and honey," by mary ruefle when she's talking about beginnings and also about poetry and the moon.

there is more to come. this is just some small slice of vision which is revealing itself to all of us in constant motion, the unfolding of lotus petals, and i think of that video of the korean chef who is a buddhist nun gently peeling one by one the lotus bud which is being arranged into a tea. can you imagine what that tea must have tasted like, the clarity and subtlety of its flavor after six days in the mountains with no coffee or recorded music.

i feel hope anyway and if there's anything i want to leave you with

it's that. i am writing this from my childhood bedroom in the suburbs of a big city in the pacific northwest. i go outside to stretch my legs and feed my body some fresh air. the air is perfect, like being thirsty and drinking a glass of cool water, and i'll admit i've woken up in the middle of the night to open the window and drink. this land is wet and regenerative. i can't understand the richness of the soil, i can only see its verdant evidence, and the precious moisture from the pacific trapped in mountain ranges and bodies of water. the most healing air from the ocean mother herself filtered through hundreds of thousands of old and new douglas firs and western red cedars. to breathe this air is to grow. to frame it in magic, i leave these sentences—or is it a poem?—as an invocation of this precious air specifically and the healing potential of our planet (which includes us) generally. invoke, envision, dream, and drink.

The force that through the green fuse drives the flower
Drives my green age; that blasts the roots of trees
Is my destroyer.
And I am dumb to tell the crooked rose
My youth is bent by the same wintry fever.

— Dylan Thomas (1914-1953)

yoga comes down from the mountain
all my relatives
were born of the sea
like me, they harbored their own pasts
they made fire and burned cedar
and followed the moon
all my relatives
(and yours too)
make themselves known on a dying planet
they are teaching us how to mourn,
because we forgot
we became afraid of the dark
and the sound of our own breathing
& the spaces in between breaths
which are tiny premonitions of our passing
they say:

we will show you how to listen
in truth you have not forgotten
yoga came down from the mountain
and this is the right time .

03.11.19

there she goes without artifice
bold face, romance, black coffee cooling
floor-based and biased
choke hold, bootstrap
all these are fair game
towards towards towards
channeling, vessel-being
if culture is not artifice either;
if humans are extruders of material
in the cosjicedance; in lila playing itself
(i am creation creating itself)

if this is true then she/i is/am trusting
in the fair-gameness
in the leaves found on the ground
and brought home, like spider's silk
i'm extruding too
it's only natural

05.12.19

some things should be shared and some should be kept
for some time later when things are ripe
and the seed has spent enough time underground
and the heart has matured past the anger
and the grapes have fermented
then and only then will we fill the new wineskins
and taste the mystery for ourselves

but for now i can share that i've been doing a little traveling
this time with no drugs, just the trust in the images
that come from my mind in active synch with my heart
today i met the queen who sits under flowered boughs
and holds a gold coin which she put aside to address me
she said:

you alone know the secret of your ripening
in the red words of christ
i tell you

05.01.20

it all comes to this moment
clinking of anklets in the yard
smoke and moon
you bet i'll be in here
hiding out from the eclipse

this is the shape of renewal
a trail of tiny ants that redirect their course
and me lining up shoeless with the others for prasad

my landlady is a numerologist
she said this year is 16
but i'm still trying to get last year's number
still ironing out the kinks
by sitting still on granite rocks and marble floors
asking my body to feel the holy hill

i can't help but worry
and take omens a little too serious
when all they've ever told me
is to calm down

12.01.20

Lunar Eclipse in Cancer

relationships, care, tenderness, recognition
safety in others / safety in self
trauma, support in recovery from trauma

and i feel an ocean of tenderness
i feel ease
waves come like breaths
everything breathes with me
and is beholden to the Moon

return my love
know the core, the formless
cast a line
put your feet in the water
care and be cared for, remember one another
and the place beyond separation
be still and know that i am

gurgle & rush
blue among us
many-limbed and limbic
palms enough to carry
ganga in your hair

i don't know exactly how it should be
and where in the weft to call out
and where in the body the knots are;
but i'm not upset to find a tender spot
i just witness
and feel safe in Her arms.

and i am; and i am
(and am not, am not)

i reach out skin for skin
i cast my eyes and look for safe harbor

19.01.20

look,
i tried to will the guru into existence
i squeezed till i could feel the blood drain out
and woke with teeth sore from clenching
and ice in my spine
which is the column through which all things flow
at least for you and me who can read poems

14.01.20

Sankranti

i nearly cry over a samosa
cooked gently in afternoon light
which touches pastel walls and barred windows
tarp coverings, ocean breezes
the changing of winds which is tomorrow

i am blown, i am a kite
i am a river never crossed twice
i am the moon no two times the same and yet cycling
i am the mother born through labor
and the child emerging
eyes opened in ceremony with a needle and wax

i am bloodletting and fire, and smoke, and ash
which is said to keep one cool
smeared on necks and foreheads

i am gracious, grateful, and grace;
and the one to whom grace is bestowed
eyes like saucers, water-born
unfolding, seeing and seen

24.01.20

When you're young you know nothing, unless you're getting on in things, and you get born enlightened, or close. I shed layers every day, though some things I will keep until I die and am rendered whole again, and the things I keep will be kept by my remembering or failure to forget, and they will be stored in the mitochondria of certain cells near the ajna, anahatta, and svadisthana chakras. The cells will play a game of telephone with the things I refuse to forget; they will whisper my secrets to new cells being divided, but this is natural too, and there's no right way of going about it, there's just way, sure as the sun is burning into dust.

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