

big horn

poems by k. bird
music by swamiitheproducer

big horn contents

creation myth
a calling
honoring ghosts
visitation
white hands
ostara
our memory
remembering dreams
holding you up to the sky
inspiration
accepting the gift
finding voice
further
peak of blossom
evolution of a whale
enlightenment
february crow
wisdom of the hive
source
enduring
creation riff
devotion

Creation Myth

the void nonbeing absence of life
no thing
one can get close to it, almost disappear
until matter and antimatter awaken us
to the ever-flowing expansion and contraction that is breathing it all
invisible, like music
sounds, molecules, ideas, wonder steady and still, present simultaneously percolating
with patterns endlessly spiraling in creative gestation
exponential as love from the center of the center of nothing becoming
pushing the perimeter further into
what is not
fire weaving waves of light into matter intertwining the nervous system of cosmos emerging as
living entity of unified diversity
a geometric paradox, flat and curved, holding us together as we travel
quarks, protons, neutrons, atoms, stars, galaxies transforming through space
cosmos, always becoming, scatters beings across universe to remember where they came from
each creation, a matrix of the greater whole
Earth, it's inner core resonating with sun source giving life with generosity of strength, fiery
formation erupting eons of volcanic mass growing crust by cooled crust
heat as life radiates from Earth's center shifting tectonic plates, creating
continents to crumble and reform
freezing and unfreezing
telling sedimentary stories for future reading
heat of charged particles riding electric currents forming language of energy moving through
Earth to its edges and returning
interplanetary collision sending Earthen rock into space, held close, our moon
reflecting soft light
saying, look at what we are a part of
from the drive of fire's perseverance
arises the gaseous form of water
water's vapors rise high
cooling to droplets forming clouds
dense with rain falling in trillions of drops over millions of years
collecting in spaces of land
in motion to form oceans
full of chemical composure replicating cycles of nourishment water as current of life
collects and disperses, transporting growth maturity of deep ocean and tempered steam ascend
from Earth's basin
achieving symbiotic creation
first single-cell common ancestor

growing, dividing, evolving transmuting light into energy proliferating oxygen
water becomes womb of life-giving rise to regeneration
at the interface of ocean, density lifts into gasses growing in gravitational awareness
chemical compositions arrange themselves into stratified spheres as air
oceanic circulation of spinning earth and equatorial heat, the great messenger of
global tides, weather patterns, sound, wind
joining all in cycles of connection
allowing the atmospheric space to be, to listen source of life in smallest form, microorganisms
as cyanobacteria in symbiotic symphony
water, sun and carbon dioxide
become photosynthesis
life blooms further as nucleus
is nourished into being
algae and seaweed swaying in oceans bring more oxygen to air
complexity to cellular structure
plants grow onto land, mosses, liverworts, plants with no names
spores spread, fertilization abounds, cell walls strengthen, roots descend
from ferns, to conifers, to the first flower
plants thrive connecting earth, water, sun and air
trees grow taller, forests form, ecosystems radiate as wisdom of food, medicine
and shelter abounds
bacteria, viruses, and fungi force adaptation and innovation to find balance
Earth's expression splits common ancestor onto three distinct paths
animals emerge, from single-cell, soft-bodied
to multicellular vastness over billions of years
from sea worms and comb jellies
to trilobites and starfish, growth patterns and body shapes adapt to habitats, creating shells,
growing spines, bridge from invertebrates to vertebrates cycles of food and reproduction make
flesh, bone and teeth
fish swim in, amphibians adapt, reptiles enlarge mammals give live births, and insects infiltrate
from water to land and back to water
fossilized footprints leave clues to pursue the puzzling mystery of evolution, cold-blooded and
warm-blooded, shaped and shaping environments
animals embody the soul of source, expressing existence quadruped, biped, legless, finned
winged, animals nestling with Earth and elements through evolution and extinction
ozone creates atmosphere, bringing us here rodents, primates, hominids, shifting genes DNA,
chromosomes, all of us made of cells a million times the number of stars in the
observable universe
hominid brains develop by listening, observing learning to explore
homo sapiens advance enduring ways
over millions of years, solving problems
making tools, communicating, sharing knowledge singing, growing larger
expanding across the globe
our greatest advancement in brain function through adaptation to fast changing climates

we seek to survive
through countless cultures, from nomadic to agrarian, discovering again and again
cooperation endures beyond brutality
love is innovative, all must thrive
for one to thrive
yet homo sapiens insist on separation for survival tell each other stories of dehumanization
build on the backs of fellow humans
confuse propagation with progress
industrialize, using millions of years of decomposition to damage the planet in decades beyond
repair for life as we know it
we continue to pollute, point fingers
make war and money to
further separate ourselves from
systems of truth, nature, our truest nature
tearing each other down, twisting universal truths into paradigms to convince each other
one way or another, the other is wrong
how can this continue to happen when so many seek peace, work tirelessly for justice
create beauty, forgive hundreds of years of oppression, hold love at the center,
teach truths for a better world for all?
each of us holds this question
feeling the answer as an inner knowing
across the globe, building trust
forgiving ourselves, each other
merging ancient wisdom with modern discovery we reweave our biome
in the best way for each of us pursuing gold of the heart as vigorously as we have mined Earth
cultivating compassion, forgiveness, gratitude, trust and unconditional love
finding ways to heal ourselves, heal each other regenerate our planet so that all may thrive
within each choice, each moment, we find unified freedom through reverence for diversity
we open to the spectrum of life communicating oneness, each being's light radiating their
unique expression of source here and now
knowing that when in hopeless struggle
we call darkness, we are held by light not yet visible within the great expanse
primal light, first light
like being in the arms of the creator we imagine which is us, loving ourselves, each other and all
of creation in this miraculous moment of duality
between wave and particle
we breathe, we listen, we laugh, our bodies instruments amplifying dynamic peace
restoring our planet beyond the limits of our collective imagination
Earth vibrating with such intensity
our families in the stars call out
Hurrah!
each of us, when we are ready, riding into
initial singularity
and out again

a calling

for Oodgeroo Noonuccal

glimpse of clear
night sky opens
the vastness of what I do not see
lost, like the dung beetle
constellationless

I follow a star path
fiery tendrils reaching
through ceiling
through obfuscating lights
until I am where I really am

floating on a planet of planets
among great beings of light

it is here I find you
as you have been for epochs
chanting for the honor of humanity
as light travels
from the beginning
visible

You beat the drum of concave sky
for the bright sound of remembrance
we have already arrived at this crossroads,
laid down our kingdoms of disbelief
our mischief, our muddle
our drunken caldrons

In a roaring blast of flame
a stone skips into our sphere
sending shock waves through our houses
made of glass
shifting our veins through cosmic impact
as we stammer to figure out what just happened
the one round hole in the frozen lake stares back
lapping
you belong to the stars

coming together

I am climbing back up
the primordial tree
coming in search of
our common ancestor

each branch I grasp
muscle contracts
makes a million years pass
brachiating

near the top, I find a great nest
curl into safe sleep
dream planetary rings
of cosmic dust
circling the evolutionary trunk

when I awaken
you hold me in your arms
I stroke the hair on your face
you feed me a fig
we listen to the sounds
of the woodland

I have your eyes

wind rattles the leaves
exposing land below
I go downward
when my feet hit the earth
you are gone

I find a stone among the roots
draw hatch marks
imagine the way you move through me

honoring ghosts

opening the door
ignites the body of you
yellow light streaming through the windows

your voice, kept like heat
in wooden walls
telling stories of life
during emancipation

the short walk across the field
where your kin helped one another
build the dotted line
of two room houses
to sharecrop
one step from the brutal tyranny of slavery
the violence and hope
creating a landscape
to feel what is possible

slant of this old kitchen floor
slides me to imagine all ten of your brothers and sisters
asleep in this room
thick with dreams
as smoke from your suppers

you are invisible, yet I feel you
catch glimpses of the fire that burned your flesh
what are you here to say

*the scorched bones of injustice
cannot be buried blindly
they must be cherished,
bathed with rose petal water
laid to rest with full
understanding of sacrifice*

*and know this, I am wisdom's child
in full possession of this house
twirling thatch roof as my skirt
dancing between the walls
sharing eternal innocence
that can never be extinguished*

visitation

the life line of your hand
pours into my hand
turning the pages of my days
I find myself reflecting
on the map of my palm
leading back to you

throwing the blasting cap
that took the sight
of your left eye
as a boy

your hands
holding the reins
of the full bodied horse
in the tiny
lost photo
before your children
were born

your hand with the smashed thumb
carrying coal from the mine
the dust in your lungs
as you tell me stories
sitting on your lap
rubbing the ridges of your nail
as one would ponder a seashell
and where it came from

a girl memorizes her grandfather

these hands are my hands
as I stoop over
holding the swaying bag of onions
stepping into your body
out of your body
in an instant

my son unfurls
his small hand, in the sunlight
it's as if you breath

white hands

let us consider our soul
the internal buzzing of life creating itself

from this eternal cave within our own mortal presence
on this land we call country
let us listen
to the ancestors
who's hands reach out even now
to feed us
as we reach back with their blood
on our own hands

in their hands they hold the beads, the colored corn
the old seeds, the chains, the cuffs, the cotton, the teeth
the feathers, the colors, the music, drum beats
power, homeland, the inventions, the codes,
essential
as our own hearts beating
let us make no mistake
they have saved us
even as we kill, mame, and imprison their children's children
even as we blame, punish, and steal from those who continue to hold us up
those who shine from the cages of lifelong trauma
the one true flame of resilience
from which the soul burns

we sing their songs, we eat their food
even as we displace
our own fear, self hatred, utter flawedness
onto their most precious lives
and ask them to stay quiet
to save us from ourselves

from our selves
let us lay down self protection
and pick up our own burdens

listening
we give back freedom
we give back protection
we give back joy
we give back money
health
money
safety
schools
a home a job
family
make the reparations happen
return power to true leaders
release the prisoners
release ourselves from the illusion there is another way
to mend the sacred web
to save the soul of america

ostara

when I first
saw you
every bud
of the dogwood tree's
twigged branches
swelled at once
unclasping
in a gasp of joy

each milky paper bract
laid itself down
to compose the delicate script
of chartreuse flowers
at their center

as a child
fresh with green heart
I leapt with the wild hare
of your arrival

Your visage rising as vernal
Spring through millennia of
compressed memory

You, unafraid to dissolve
into the eternal
sprouting of tenderness
the pullulation of grasses
after the burn

bring forth effortless
regeneration
as the ethereal frog
flowing
for forgiveness

I arise for you
stand in corporal myth
receive the jade you place
in my mouth

our memory

we've migrated to mountains
with monarchs

taken by goldenrod
driving us with promise
of sun on shortening days

here on the hill
above the lake
awash with somber colors of turning leaves
we stand as the echo of a portrait
the one of our ancestors
behind the bubbled glass

this final visit
ablaze in yellow
like the tree that marks our path
and the cycle that continues
when we are gone

remembering dreams

In the closet of my mind
a shelf of tin cylinders
houses celluloid rolls
of dream parts
short films
many having disintegrated
from age, as in tombs

the projector lights up
the dust
in a darkened room
often the sound is lost

in this one
we stand on the cavern floor
gazing at the luminescent water
when emerges the largess silhouette
of a sea turtle

rising to the surface
it's colors ring out scales of green
shell shapes of prehistoric symbol
entranced
 the glowing ghost
 of a boy who has been lost
 runs towards us
 we flee in terror,
 I awaken in fear

as I watch now
it is clear
the boy was bringing us
what we had lost

the dust
the reel to reel
the place from where
the sea turtle appeared

holding you up to the sky

opening
an expanse of wings swooping
to crown my head
you let me know
you were coming

circles birthing circles
in timeless orchestration
you fell

through us, into my body
we danced our kaleidoscope
of cellular shapes

now I hold you up to the light
look through the awareness
of your eyes
circle, circle, circle
unite

inspiration

I send you a bird blown
from a cloud of ground ochre
red, fast
a single branch of evergreen from her beak

you hold your palms open to her
lighting the green fuse
Juniper fuse

burning as red splatter
outlining our hands
on the cave wall

I look to you
receiving
the one who holds the light

accepting the gift

death stands present
in a cloak of black feathers
humming

I slide into dark water
a narrowing light above

the soft water
lulls me toward
a different animal
I am afraid
the light disappearing

I let go, realize I can breathe
turn, swiftly as a seal
into the abyss

when I emerge on the other side
my legs return
wobbling I rise up
telling poems to the sky

finding voice

Sor Juana, the flower
of my grandmothers is the rose
wild roses in the dark
the red line blood travels
down my inner leg

she is a rose, no, she is a star, you say
your colloquy a supernova
releasing the red rose cloud

roots of a rose and core of a star

your hand strokes mine as petals
in translation of the mother tongue
regenerating
the missing arms of starfish

further

I call out to fox
through winter woods

in the echo
I hear her silence

fox calls back to me
through pulsed steps
of padded paws
driven by hope

she begets me to listen

my ears become
underground tunnels
as her vixen brush burns
for me to follow

each step uncovering the next
she is a poet

she let me find her once
led by unknown source of love
through bramble, bracken, and brier
I unstuck myself from thorny gate
crouching up from all fours
my gaze strikes hers
standing in profile
ablaze in the setting sun

it is only now I hear her

she says, *we have come,*
from a long way down,
further still
we are safe through the generous fields

peak of blossom

you are one among billions
of flowers

opened in vibrancy
from the root of catastrophe

even as one plucks dead heads
rubbing their pulpy wither
between finger and thumb
the blossoms rage on

consider the invisible lines
made criss crossed by
winged ones
and splendor of crocus

do not retreat into despair
of ungraspable beauty

allow your cries
like the peacock
to sing with unstoppable radiance

and if you can not allow yourself
to believe
this is happening
simply smile

evolution of a whale

we all play our part
elements, particles, syllables
moving in and out
of empty space
footsteps measuring billions
invisible symphony of process
holotype of the millipede -
first air breather

most important might be
staying open to the call
allowing it to ring through you
like a mammal called back
to sea

listen deeply as the whales
who once had four legs
found courage to become
the ocean

they sing of humanity to the stars
stories of beauty and light
spiraling upwards
you have heard of the eyes of the heart

allow these eyes to open you
to the origin of its beat and future
of its rhythm at once

when you forget
ask the whales
what is possible in love

enlightenment

among spectrums of light
we are
spirit refracting

rainbows of glory rest in each drop
falling into, into

and sprouting wings
as the snake
weaving human time

we ride this flow
red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo,
all time
Brahman
now

this is how I walk
how I stumble
how I see the rainbow
in you
and we fly

february crow

crow caws three times through frigid air,
then another three caws from a more distant tree
and another further off

one crow recalls a February morning long ago

one crow pierces this moment, sitting in the hayloft listening, child asleep in my arms

one crow returns from some future place
threading together, a trio in flight

now, I am in the future place
the child has grown some years
the crow caws three times in February
in the tree outside my window

I hear the first caw, the light of oneness
the second caw, I am a vessel of this light
the third caw I allow the light to come through me
I simply allow

wisdom of the hive

striped satellites cruising in clumsy orbit
nuzzling with nourish for nectar
I hear the cadence of your varied vibration

drawn by a color force
adrift of vocabulary
intersecting with flowers
where stamens and pistils
blend with spiracles and pollen baskets hide
on hind legs rubbing ovules

we find resilience in flight through
poison clouds of consumption
speak with resonance
through gesture of body
politic and pollination
to protect the hive
making honey for the future

source

you came on the wind
and the messengers of wind
the hawks

you say gliding overhead
I am particles of light
in a field of harmonic gesture
welcome me home

from the branch you say
listen for peace within
the song of space

I am life in a multitude
of loving moments
this is how you see me
how my heart is of your heart

earth winds, solar winds
winds of no names
deliver us in the great pivot
of spiral

I give this feather to you
fly round, fly round
I have come back to you
fly round, fly round
I never left

enduring

for Amanda Gorman

from the one tongue speaking
many tongues
lifted by the light of you
to the horizon
of a thousand tomorrows

you carry us from the space
before language
as rhythm walking through
who we were striving to be
illuminating our bitter short falls
moving us ever closer to your essence

past, present and future coalesce
in your ever present drive to make music of truth
through our syllabic dreams of a universe listening

up and down the ladder
off the boat threatening to be taken
by the waves of human error
we who heed your call
understand you as another
breath, allowing us to survive

as moons, as suns
the eternity of the tide
you fill us with the light
we dare to be

I lift my aging face to you
to bathe me
opening the door to my heart
as you conduct the elegant
limbs of our children
raising hope for us all

creation riff

for Max Roach

rumbling roll

tom tom explosion

open time

bebop rhyme

syncopated beat

atomical, molecular, cellular,

phenomenal

nucleonica

cymbal wave

crash, splash

stardust scatters

strings, strings, strings

it's time

when you were born

in came

the horn

devotion

dream horse galloping lightning legged across the plains
making mighty strides toward flight for freedom
stirring the milky way haze of our collective yearning

my spirit transcends as poppy blossoms
lifted by the wind riding your mane
inhaled by the sweet grassy breath
of your silken nose
bound to you as a cocklebur

run, run
I am delivered daily by the echo of your hooves
through the hollow of my body
open to the mystery
of where we are headed