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Independent scholar

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Four poems: ‘Waves’, ‘after Thinking Like a Mountain’, ‘Fire’, ‘Water’

Abstract:

In the Anthropocene era, human activity on the planet – including deforestation, agriculture, extraction, industrial production and consumption – has dominated earth’s biosphere so drastically as to create global, ecological imbalances. The practice of ecopoetics stands in contrast to an anthropocentric approach of place-domination. Instead, ecopoetic place-making explores connection and responsibility to earth. In Australia, this is a difficult task, since many of us are living on stolen land that is also “wounded space ... that has been torn and fractured by violence and exile” (Rose p. 2). In the ecopoetic vein, these poems seek to witness: to listen with attentiveness to the destruction of ecological and cultural systems, as well as to the life that endures through trees, rivers, soil, plant life, culture, animals and people – all beings. Responsive to the processes of nature, the poems begin to imitate. Within this framework of relationality, poetry becomes an act of care. As John Seed and Arne Naess posit, conscious identification with other life-forms leads to coexistence and care (Seed et al. p. 13, p. 25). Through voice and connection, writing engenders receptive healing, both personal and in the historical present, and into death. The poetry imagines a diverse reality: one in which the land is returned to its rightful caretakers and all beings retain the chance to flourish.

Biographical note:

Lucia Moon is a poet, writer and editor living on Gadigal land. They hold a Master of Research in poetics and work for an environmental NGO. In 2022, Lucia undertook a *Sydney Review of Books* Academic Publishing Traineeship. Lucia is a recognised performer in the Sydney poetry scene. Recent work can be found in *Plumwood Mountain*, *Sydney Review of Books*, *Riverstone* and *LOR*.

Keywords:

Ecopoetics, poetry, place, Anthropocene

Waves

Then my poems become jungles
with leaves outward fanning kaleidoscopic

reticulate venation
on the fire croton, star palm
threatening nuts overhead

Then she writes to say
my poetry influences – please
observing a swift

plucking the netting from an open leaf
I ask, how are you?

Making peace with what blows
she responds, I just went in
for a swim

This is how I learned to speak
quietly watching
the dance of brushes

late evening timpani or duck-diving
in small, oceanic waves rolling in

after *Thinking Like a Mountain*

It all turns back into matter
reintegrating – scary
a lack of consciousness ...
Or conscious everywhere –
lighter elements
float to the surface, forming
a granite crust.
Selfhood chiselled
from the bevel in the cup
the twisted fig, metallic
and fired, erupting
'til 4 billion years ago,
when the temperature dropped
and it began to rain ...
I guess it is like drinking water
we fall asleep
on the axis of the sun,
awaking refracted
in shreds of soil
humming across
a human network
embedded, in every other one ...

Fire

It's that time of year again
purple sky
so much forgotten, walking

and the fresh green growth
sprouts iridescent
on charred memory

Disbelief, how the place
has changed
the fire came roaring, up valley

refusing to leave
perched on hand
a single man
with pump spray

maybe we'll never see the end of this

But the waterferns
have flourished, seedlings
plush like carpet

Staring wide-eyed at the meandering creek

Water

Rain cascades for days, no end

This was life on the mountain:
grey, foggy, damp

Driving out – centrifugal – from the city
sky loosened and the cycle

rotated more easily
wet, wet.

Basil, parsley, mint
marigolds, drinking thirstily

psychedelic radishes
with rings of growth

the soil clumped and when
the cliff of the mountain was soaked
it broke.

References

Rose, D. B. (2004). *Reports from a wild country: Ethics for decolonisation*. UNSW Press.

Seed, J., Macy, J., Fleming, P. & Naess, A. (2007). *Thinking like a mountain: Towards a council of all beings*. New Catalyst Books.