

# Poems

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## *Salmon Song*

My ancestors sang their bones  
up this same dark river  
skin flayed and scarlet  
a banner of passion abandoned  
on the river stones.

Bones of my ancestors carry me  
threading a needle through time.  
Flesh of my ancestors feeds me  
a flame licking upstream.  
Spirit of my ancestors carries me  
a seed in the arms of the wind.

## *Searching for the Pattern*

Sagebrush, pungent now after the rumbling thunder storm,  
rests easily in the vast silent landscape, silvery under the bowl of stars.

Even the waterfall at the creek is invisible to the ear.  
The Milky Way floats in space outside the cabin door.

I hesitate to break the silence with this old silver flute,  
yet finally take it to my lips, this neglected friend,  
With fingering unfamiliar after all these years, I reach  
for each note searching slowly, blindly for the pattern.

Between the long whole notes, during the rest notes,  
a chorus rises out of the desert night — wild coyote music.

They sing out from the creek, the flute replies.  
Another chorus calls from the cliffs.

We call out in the dark — listening, calling into the distance.  
the pattern slowly unfolds in the calling, the pausing,  
the listening, the return, the calling,  
the pausing, the listening, the return.

*The Key*

The key  
is in the breastbone  
where the heart  
rises up to meet the day.

*There is a Stone*

There is a stone  
wearing a coat of green moss  
near the lake.  
It is listening to the water's edge.

*Tree*

Outside the window,  
breathing in the wind,  
bending without breaking,  
cellular awareness,  
a sensing of roots,  
and deep water strength;  
the air,  
the endless space,  
surrounds and permeates  
your every fiber,  
nestles in beside your needles  
and holds you.