

# Hymn to Pan Polymorph

crayfish

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Mother Earth, we say,  
The words roll off our tongues.

If Earth is our mother, who then is/was Our Father?  
Yahweh? Indra? Zeus? Thor the Thunderer?  
The whole gang of sky gods, firing their big-bang round of seminal, spermatozoid starter-fluid  
to get the shit-ball rolling off the slag heap and onto the road of history?  
Are we a bastard child, Humanity the unwanted,  
forced upon the Earth by arrogant, pro-life cosmic cops?

Has Father left us, alone, with a mute, bound-and-gagged Mother,  
with only the instruction, barely legible on fading yellowed tablets:  
“Do as I did (unto Her), She is your dominion”?  
Or perhaps this was an arranged wedding, like His Son was wed to His Church,  
lovers till doom, incestuous.  
We the Son barely struggling at Her thighs, told  
“I must leave you (business elsewhere in the galaxy),  
Take care of Her as your wife”  
(not as your lover).

Naming us “Man,” He, self-proclaimed Word of the Worlds, Namer of Names,  
leaves us two choices:  
to love, revere, and worship her;  
to rape, abuse, and batter her.

This Nature we will lavish with gifts, praise Her with names,  
toast Her with wine and with song,  
and worship with blood from our sacrificed brethren.  
We will dance on her brown body until we can no longer hear her cries,  
then we will call her mute, and call her tyrant,  
and say it is She who enslaves us,  
and we will punish Her.

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But who are you who comes to me this night, who drugs me and whispers in my blood  
*NO, NO!* (your words shake me, throttle my flesh),  
she is sister, you say, she is brother, she is hybrid cyborg coyote creature,  
she is death into whose arms we glide,  
*HE IS DEATH*, and He escapes us as we search for Him,  
escapes through the cracking pavement of our bodies,  
escapes in our exhalations

as we search with our torch-lights and dogs  
Has He left us, broken-mirrored in our sadness,  
will He not return?

but She,  
she is you, she is He, she is polymorph, now this, now that,  
i run and touch, i run and grasp  
*is this You?*

but there is only wind,  
*i lunge for You,*  
and there is only sand, and broken shards  
fractured on the grass

i gather the traces You have left behind  
i weave them into a banner, and as i hoist it, it shreds itself  
invisible  
in the wind

i search for those glimmering fragments of You,  
of what i thought was You,  
and of Him, who had left us,  
and the vials full of names He had dropped as He fled,  
i search in the wind, i gaze under rocks,  
i stumble over clouds and plunge to ocean depths  
all the while gathering words that have grown in Your tracks,  
sprouted in the footprints You have left

You, Pan, brother stag, who have left me staggering in the morning  
drunken on the dawn dew of life  
You, who have startled me awake and now are gone  
You, Son of Man, Daughter of Fire, Wisdom breath blazing across galaxies  
I worship You, You who came to worship me,  
whose lips encircled mine, tongues fused,  
our floods released in each others mouths  
filled with words and white liquid stars

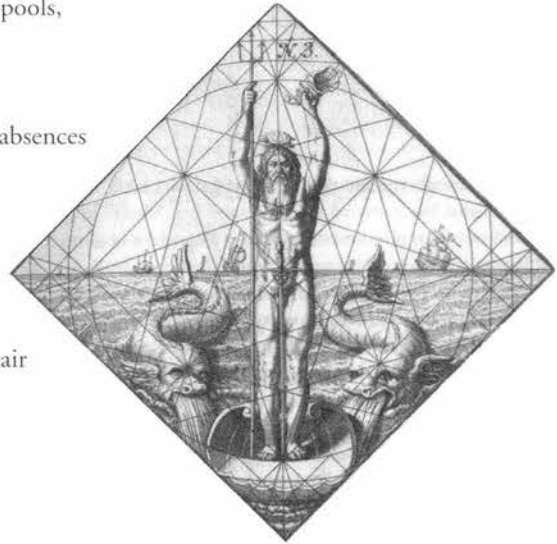
These words i now gather in the faltering dawn  
words i collect from the sand-strewn beaches swathed across the face of morning,  
words of children, ruins of castles left to wash away in the tide,  
words collected from the seaweed that entwines my legs and arms as i submerge myself to find you,  
words collected from rusty ships' hulls grounded on the ocean's floor,  
words clipped out from the bodies of corpses,  
stolen from the lips of drowned sailors,  
words found flung onto the nets of angels whose wings slowly sinking unwind  
and drape over rocks and coral reefs,  
words found in bottles

And when i have gathered them all,  
and when i have collected them,  
i will recite these words to You  
i will hold them to Your lips,  
these words i have wrapped around my phallus like a flag,  
these words that have smothered and smoldered and seethed,  
words that have seared and burned sigils into my flesh,  
words turned to ashes

i will present these words to You,  
brother, Light-bearer, veiled sister,  
You who hide behind many names,  
whose diamond-glinted traces glimmer in the silences i uncover  
turning over the rock faces of your submerged wounds,  
whose lips have slithered over my breasts and limbs  
leaving behind soft explosions of moss sprouting in the crevasses,  
whose fingers have scrawled on my flesh  
"It is not me who comes to you, it is She,"  
You, black mother! You, diamond-vajra-father! Red sister!  
You, who have penetrated my arteries, spilled your flesh into my gene-pools,  
ignited the blood rushing through my veins,  
who have spun salivary webs with your mucus lips,  
showered me with them  
and hung me to dry on the breaths of Your absences

You, nature! You, god! You, friend! You, fiend! You, hunter!  
You, hunted!  
When i think i have captured you, you are zero,  
a fish floating through my hands as i slip  
beneath the sheaths of Your golden sea-hair

when i whisper these words to you,  
my tongue pressed against your flesh  
i will know you are me  
we are she  
we are life



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*crayfish* is a pen-name of a PhD candidate at York's Faculty of Environmental Studies

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