

The Summer Solstice

The summer solstice is the Sun travelling.
& birthing the longest day of sunshine ever,
this birth, like creation, does not care about our Blues.
It moves like egg and sperm,
dancing with womb dark music.
When I was a child,
Momma would pull up her green tomatoes from our garden,
sitting them on the window sill,
watching Sun turn green into bright red vegetables.
Ecclesiastes sings – “There is nothing new under the Sun,”
So we wait in Spring for the following season – summer.
One day, Momma, your youngest spoiled son
begs you for a dog when pets are not permitted
in the housing projects.
It is the first day of summer – the solstice,
& bringing this dog home,
you worry about our neighbors.
Princess, funny,
barks at Christmas tree lights
which blink off and on in colors – red, yellow, and green.
Growing year after year,
Princess growls at the tree lighted branches,
sensing danger in our pagan celebrations.
There was little sunlight the day Princess,
left running wild with a group of stray dogs,
returning home pregnant,
eating more & opening a flour bag in the closet,
bearing four puppies.
A neighbor borrowing sugar from us,
reported our dog,
calling a dog catcher.
A strange man knocks on the door,
demands Princess and her puppies leave.

Momma, you were ironing white sheets,
trembling,
the stranger, picking up Princess without knowing her name,
or her babies,
dropping them in his truck,
putting them to death,
unstoppable tears flowing from you and me.

All the while, the summer solstice is the Sun travelling
& birthing the longest day of sunshine ever.
Placing my right hand over my eyebrows and third eye,
I can no longer see our Sun.
My hand is the Blues,
blocking out sunlight.
Years later George Floyd is crying for his mother in our Sun,
his blues for all to see in daylight,
few believing his life tragedies
until a cell phone camera,
recording him on the ground,
the camera opening up hearts to Truth.
Yes. Billie Holiday sang "*Strange Fruit*,"
Nina Simone sings "*Four Women*,"
Sam Cooke howls "That's the sound of
the men working on the chain gang"
& Bob Dylan asks "How many roads must a man
walk down before you can call him a man?"
songs humming in our ears
while the Blues are a pregnant woman
giving birth to those who scream: "I can't breathe!"

This is a slow day of the COVID lockdown,
we are staying in our homes,
living away from highways and streets,
away from yachts and ships crowding the oceans.
This March lockdown surrounds people around the Earth,

keeping us in front of televisions,
taking us to Australia
where gray whales swim joyously to the shore,
these whales taking time to swim where the landlocked ships
will not plough them down in their ocean space.

Now the summer solstice is the Sun travelling
& birthing the longest day of sunshine ever.
Reading an old letter from home,
I sit in Central Park,
watching a white swan float with quiet beauty,
& then walk down the avenue,
hearing an old man playing on a guitar,
“Wade in the water,
wade in the water,
wade in the water, children,
God’s gonna trouble these waters,”
Didn’t my Lord deliver Daniel?
Well, then, why not every man?”
his voice following me as I walk.
America is a fault line with pending earthquakes of hatred.

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