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The Shaman Meets With the Man in the Moon

by

Joseph Murphy

I grasp rungs of light ascending from a lilac's bud.

Passing the seven-colored mountain's peak,
I draw a dreamer's fingers from my drum's skin:
Through them,
Reach the final rung.

Guided by my ancestors' marks, I step
Through a maze
As others would a stream.

One of my spirits hisses free before The Gate of Bones.

The bolts groan beneath that spirit's bloodied fins:
Hinges splinter;
The dark's gnarled echo
Recedes.

I pass through and perch on a spoke of light.

The Man in the Moon greets me;
Offers a silken thread
Linked to all the souls I am to return
To body and breath.

When I take it in my beak, I awake
In a pine's topmost limbs
Knowing the fullness
Of my fate.