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Summer Solstice

by
Roger Echo-Hawk

Rumor awakened in their underground realm
Of a country far-off. All the sleeping animals
Howled in their sleep, rattled horns, whistled
Stirring eagerly in their slumber below the earth
They stood in their cities, the Summer King spoke
Of his distant destinations. He had journeyed far
Beyond faded tales of a forgotten whispered path
Holding odd seeds he had returned underground
Hidden warmth in his hands moved their hearts
Everyone stood, the people and the animals stood
Insensible, the animals groaned, now they'd start
To somehow find a way through troubled dreams
They'd question one murky belief after another
And abandon all to believe in the world above.



In our retellings I suppose we don't much bother
Keeping straight the bent details, crooked roads
In one tale after another, how we handed down
Sidelong versions of whatever happened next
Under ebbing oceans an ancient underground
Somewhere in the receding past they kept saying
Their slippery sense of community mattered, it
Shaped them, their history, the story they filled
Themselves with every day, waking their minds
Connecting to the history of memory as if it all
Felt real, seemed specific enough, logical enough
Those changing details that give rise to the world
In our retellings of the tale along a crooked road



Summer King, Morning Star, child of sunshine
Along his pathway stumbled enchanted animals
Flickering in & out of view, everyone followed
Peering into the nearby future, eyes closed as if
Gathered underground, seeing through shadows
Another land full of seeds with glowing hearts
Alight in his open hands, the King of Summer



To see the future one must look into the mirror
Of the past. It isn't difficult to justify the story
Of what we think we know, all of that knowing
The Summer King stands in underground cities
A sightless crowd of creatures that howl and stir
The King of Summer knows; in his hands, light



So now we will go and I know it is difficult to go
Though no one can see very far into the future
How earth in this version of the story is hollow
Where is the evidence, the advocacy we need
For reconciliation, the latitude of togetherness
Of our diurnal rhythms, our nocturnal patterns
The worldwide distribution of necessary traits
The trail of traits leading us back into ourselves
A world under the world of lumbering animals
Wandering from one enchanted land to another
All of us, our eyes closed, yes we think we know
Groping for lifetimes through scene after scene
As if rumors will tell us that now it is time to go
We hear there is a mirror at the end of the dream



He stood up in the mirror at the end of the dream
Summer King, the King of Summer Solstice stood
Among all the fabled forgotten creatures long ago
In darkened cities underground the Summer King
Spoke without speaking, a whispering light inside
His hands, lost in wonder, somewhere in the past
He stood up in the mirror at the end of the dream