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We Find a Body in the Field

and isn’t he beautiful? With a body occupied by equal parts beetles and blow flies, science points to a number of assumptions regarding his *living* existence:

As we examine the slipped skin of his hands—tenderly, beneath harsh light—the remnants of callouses imply him to be *passionate*.

Dried clay, a sculptor; flushed skin, a lover.

Note: *Unclear whether damage to clothing is ante- or postmortem.*

Don’t you think him romantic? His body becomes:
a) a home to cold creatures; b) a well-deserved meal.

A beautiful process. It continues and continues and continues.

At this stage of active decay, the body becomes liquid.
Now leaking into the earth his understanding of reciprocity becomes clear. Range: *Devout – Negligent.*
Current opinions favor the former.

Now, as the maggots migrate away from the body, all conclusions suggest we embrace him; open up his body with your bare hands and crawl inside. When you press your lips to his bone (your bone).

Recognize he isn’t asking for anything more than nothing. Recognize he only needs your sweetness and time.

Edwin Williamson
**the earth knows**

People need to know that they stand on a land altered. They need to know that the landscape they inhabit has not always known asphalt and concrete, cars and neighborhoods. Every footprint of ground has an ancient history the best ecologists and geologists can only aspire to grasp.

But somewhere buried deep in the land, under the soil and loam, perhaps in the bedrock, this part of the earth knows what it is meant to be – a prairie billowing with grasses, housing birds and ground rodents, or a forest thick with trees who have seen the world change around them.

The land has memory, and it is coded into its very being.

Perhaps if people understood the extent to which the hand of man has forever changed this planet and its habitats, that we are practically last in a long history of evolution, that we are all but novices at living on this earth compared to every other creature, perhaps we would finally grasp that not all land is ours for the taking.

We have dug ourselves into a hole so deep that all there is left to do is look up.

See where we have fallen short.

Where instead the planet knows best.

People need to know that nature will do what nature does: clean what we have dirtied, revert and restore what we have changed and damaged, and return the land – however slowly it may seem to our human concept of time – to what it is meant to be.

Katie VanDyke

Supermoon. A salve.
Tin-types a silver-
White liquid ribbon.
Ties the fronds
And amphibians
Together.

A bucket overturns
Along with Roe V.
Wade. The Epa,
Baby formula,
Breathing.

Valerie Salerno
SUPER BUCK MOON 2022

Who heard her? The Heron
Scraping hot despair
From the depths of her gut.
Leaking songs not sung,
But increasingly felt.

A black headband
Paints the sun
Over her eyes.
She pulls her head
Into her chest
Till night when
She hangs on trees.

A magic banshee,
She leads away
By screaming far
Above the rest.

Rine Wakeman
Mycorrhizal Network

We whisper to each other, carrying the sound of our leaves rustling in the wind as the trespassers enter our home. We are mothers and grandmothers sending distress signals through our root systems to our children that we may not be here much longer to provide protection and nutrition to them. We are under attack, but this time from something much larger than insects. Us mothers have lived our lives for generations, and we have experienced these pale predators before when we were saplings and observed helplessly as our fathers and grandfathers fell. We feel the vibrations from their giant long paws hitting the ground as they walk absurdly on two legs, carrying items made from our flesh.

Hickories worry about bats using their shaggy bark as refuge from the sun. Maples, concerned their beauty will be forgotten as the season changes. Oaks, strong and mighty know they are doomed, the protectors of the forest in desperate need of defense now. Beech trees, with their carved eyes watch everything aware they are safe due to the rot that is hidden beneath their bark. Black Cherry, upset about the lack of nourishment provided to a multitude of organisms by their removal. Elm, with their mighty size now unattainable due to imported disease. Black Walnut, important in the fight against illness in these two-legged hairless parasites, but not yet known for their benefits. Tulip Poplar, stand no chance at missing the axe, too important for the building of houses and canoes, and it is forgotten they aid with inflammation, fever, and diarrhea. Ash, with their capability to restore a natural system, stabilizing stream banks, worry about flooding and lack of shade for terrestrial and aquatic animals, but they also know they will resprout if their roots remain strong and healthy.

We all watch, unable to defend ourselves. We are immobile, stuck by the origins that ground us, connect us. These animals never look the same, they’re distinguishable, unlike other organisms. Time ago, we did not fear them like we do now. They came in small groupings, using relatives that had fallen from
storms or disease for their weapons, water rafts, and dwellings. They spoke to us, comforting us, thanking us, keeping us intact, eating our fruit and seeds while also dispersing our offspring. Now they are ungrateful, selfish, taking from the living with many years left to grow rings.

We hope when our saplings become mature, these beings will heal our land allowing us to flourish once more. They’ll walk between us admiring our greatness and beauty as we marvel at their mobility. We long to live in union with them like the squirrels that run amongst our branches, the slugs that live amongst our bark, an entire ecosystem living interdependently, all benefitting from one another. A time when they will not trigger fear responses, mass cutting of forests; leaving our roots in the ground missing their body.

Sarah Craft