

If I could

If I could I would sing the land
let it drift into your mouth
slide down your parched throat
moisten the bone-lodge
that houses your heart,
where my Elders teach
Intelligence resides.

If I could I'd cup your face
guide it toward the sun
allow the gentle winds
to wipe your sorrows
down the furrows of your skin.

If I could I'd cross the rivers
guide you through
the murky turbulent flow
on the footprints of the rocks,
take you to the distant shore.

We've met you and I
spirits sharing this common space.
We've made brief eye contact
examined each other
head to toe
as we hurried by.

Your country has been my sorrow
muddled fear and caution
that brought confusion
and terror to my tribes.
My country lives in the muscle
memory
the grandmothers and grandfathers
hovering by my side.

Yet, here we are
history having woven us together,
our forefathers, our foremothers
at our feet.
They wait to share this feast

where intelligence resides.

I yearn for a community
that has the ears of a moose
the wide heavens of the eagle's eye
the curious smile of a mouse.
Releasing us from
these wounded hearts.
I echo my ancestor's words,
tawâw
There is room.

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Parliamentary Poet Laureate**