

## **The final poem**

The final poem has yet to be written  
And it is not one that any one person will write.

This poem unfolds as we step together towards our freedom;  
As we center ourselves in this story of becoming –  
This story of relationship and connection and meaning,  
As we each realize our purpose – of the work that we need to do while we are here,  
Of the love that we need to bring to that work.

We are lost; we are not yet gone.  
We are lost, but we needn't stay lost in our own stories of who we are,  
Lost in the stories of the power we do not have.

Our fear, our doubt, our guilt, our shame –  
All of these will leave us paralyzed in our own personal hells,  
And all of these will be our best teachers in how we come to find ourselves and our freedom,  
Even in the low times, the lonely times,  
When we must learn how to love again, to connect again.

This poem has yet to be written,  
And it is already some thousands of years old.  
It is the poem of the struggle against all domination;

Of how the land holds those memories of struggle,

Even if we have chosen to forget.

It is the poem of how no matter how much has been taken or broken,

The sparks of the stories of who we are stay alive;

In spite of the enslavement, in spite of the oppression,

In spite of the control of our bodies and minds,

In spite of how each of us in turn is turned into a colonizer, an oppressor.

We can relearn how to live in relationship.

We can relearn how to work together.

We can relearn that we are more than hungry ghosts,

Endlessly consuming to fill an endless void;

Always craving to be loved,

And forgetting what it means to simply love

What is.

We can relearn how to take time for gratitude,

For the sacred;

We can forget what it means to be individually successful;

We can understand again that we are all equal;

That superiority is an illness,

That we need no elites or kings or great government,

That to organize for ourselves is a natural law that every cell in our body,

That every member of an ecological community,

That the entirety of our mother earth follows.

Our relationship to the land, to the air, soil, rivers and seas,  
Plants, animals and each other is our birthright,  
And we can learn how to fight for it and against all that stands in the way.

We can learn to make the choice to fight,  
- And we must learn what it will mean if we choose not to.

Even when this struggle may seem so fruitless,  
Even when we seem to lose more than we gain,  
Even when we don't know what to do anymore,

We learn from history, we learn from each other,  
We learn how to heal;  
We learn solidarity,  
And that there is no need to take what is not ours.

We are lost, we are not yet gone.  
And there is so much work to be done  
In the writing of the final poem,  
Of which we can all be part.

We are still in struggle,  
We are still Rising Up.