

## Rhythm and Melody

My body is light and soft with feathers. The wind fills my heart and pulls me into the sky. The open beauty of eternity in the expanse. My body becoming light. I look down at my nest far below and remember. My baby. I need to teach her to fly before I go. I feel the heavy dense love pull me down to her. I will give all I have to show her how to be wind. She is frightened but I reassure her that falling is necessary. Without falling you cannot fly. I tell her how many times I have fallen. All she sees is how I fly. I show her how to stretch her wings out strong. The wind will do the rest. I blow into her feathers so she can feel the sweet tension pulling on her body. The soft caress over her face. I show her how to flap her wings, though it is not necessary yet. All she must do is be brave. The moment of lift or the moment of impact. Both are a gift. The greater is impact. Resilience is not taught by success. My heart is heavy with a painful love as I encourage her to jump. She is not ready. I tell her it's ok to be scared. Everyone is scared the first time. I can see that she wants to but her fear is so strong. She looks out and spreads her wings. I give her a gentle nudge. She screams and tells me not to push her. I stop. I don't want to become the thing she fears. I tell her she has all the time she needs. She spreads her wings again, but she is not ready. I hold her and feel a selfish relief and shame that I have failed her. But there is no rush. Love is more important than progress. I cannot turn her fear into bliss. That is her challenge to overcome.

Many years later she has flown out of the nest and has babies of her own to care for. She holds them with the same heavy love I held her. It's harder now to fly so high and feel the rush of wind. The dense love has weighed me down and I am afraid to let it go. I must learn how to fly again. My mother showed me but I am so scared. I know the only thing I need is courage. And to let go. And feel my body swept up into light again. I am not afraid of becoming light. I am afraid that my love will not come with me. I am afraid I will forget my love. My mother told me not to be afraid. Love is all there is.

I let go.

I am sitting on large cut stones forming the edge of a river bank. The water a swirl of golden mica and deep black. The stars and galaxies shining brightly overhead. I have long arms and legs with a thin covering of hair not enough to hide my skin. My feet are in the warm water that comes up through my body and soothes me with a deep calming presence. My feet stir the surface. A luminous face forms and a thousand soft whispers course through me. They tell me it is not time.

I am taken to a great hall filled with a soaring and billowing melody that fills me with a love so full my body expands to fill the space. I have become the hall and the sounds are within me. Short powerful pulses resonate through me. I feel my chest surge with each impact. More pulses carry the sounds through to my hands. The pulse in my chest continues as there are more and more layers of rhythm being sent through my body to my feet and shoulders and each individual finger and toe. I am ecstatic with joy and burst into a throbbing laughter which combines with the cadence to fill my body with the rhythm of God.

I am in an open meadow. A soft breeze sweeps the tall grass. The slender blades rubbing against each other creates a swelling of sound with each caress of the smooth stalks. There are dragonflies thrumming. Becoming louder as they come toward me, the tone shifting lower as they go by. Cicadas buzz from the trees that are sparsely thrown onto the open field. Birds chitter at one another in rushing trills and chirps. I open my chest and weigh the surging pulse against the sounds of wind and grass and animal. I am rhythm giving balance to the life around me.

A jubilant chorus pulls me into a swirling dance cascading over the edge of eternity and onto the earth. I am swept into a frenzy of rhythm and dance as the melody is dispersed into the wind and I burrow my way into the soil and sand and dirt and into the gnashing gnawing grinding jaws of death. I laugh at how long it takes for God to chew me.

Deep in the earth, inhumed in the soil. The slow rhythms of turning, the moon pulling the oceans, the gentle sway back and forth of tilting on axis.

A long slow Melody calls to me. I begin to swell with love. My hard shell cracks open. I reach for Her. Up through the soil to meet in the open land. She offers Herself to me and we dance in the wind and sky and sea. My love grows more sure and steady and I play my rhythm for Her. Her melody meets me and my love is redoubled. I play stronger and louder in my passion. I revel in my strength as I beat ecstatic rhythms of love to Melody. I am churning the earth and hammering and pounding rocks and boulders into soil and sand as I feel the lightning hot charge of the divine rhythm course through me. I have become the grinding jaws of death. I marvel at myself in my full power. But I am growing tired. I miss Melody and the fullness of love and light. I am small again and feel shame for letting my rhythmic passion overwhelm Her. I have a deep ache where my heart has no Melody to weigh itself against.

The ground soothes me and lets me forget for a time. I am selfless and quiet. The earth turns and rocks and cradles me. The moon strokes my body. I feel the rhythm again. Soft and gentle. Calling me back to myself. My heart responds with a slow swelling. Rising and falling, rising and

falling with the moon's caress. My yearning grows to hear the melody again. I will balance with Her and honor Her gifts with my rhythm. I will not overcome Her in my passion. I will not become death again. My vow brings me courage and my heart beats stronger. Melody calls and I slowly rise to meet her. I play my rhythm for Her. Her love is heavy in me with knowledge of the pain I have caused. She is radiant and warm and lifts me into her arms. We move together. My rhythm is careful and slow. Her Melody rises. My rhythm responds and my connection to the divine strengthens. Tempered with knowledge we find the balance and dance together with a passion deep and strong, rooted to the earth. The earth resonates with love as our music fills us. My heavy steps crush the mountains into dirt as we dance. I stop my rhythm and am dismayed to see the destruction I have caused. I look around and see other rhythm makers gleefully and maliciously stomping and kicking, and I shrink back into the dirt as the rhythmic grinding of death consumes me again. The jaws continue to chew and grind and I weep in despair.

My tears spill into the earth and the cold damp soil presses against me. The earth's rhythms are a cruel reminder of the destruction I've caused. Of how alone I am. I wind tight into myself and become a stone. The cycles of the earth and moon come and go. Melody calls but I do not answer. I feel the grinding again. Grinding me down into sand and dirt and soil. Other rhythm makers come. They burrow into me and shed their tears of shame. I hold their tears against their hard shells and they soften. When Melody comes it is easier for them to break through. Their tears have softened me, too. They reach through my soil to meet Her. I watch them go and begin to long to dance with Melody again. But I am afraid to play my rhythm. She is still calling but I don't know how to respond. She tells me to sing. I don't know how. She keeps calling and I feel myself expand with wind. I don't know what to do. She tells me to let go. The air releases and the earth vibrates with love. The wind comes again and flows through me to create a melody of my own that I sing back to Her. The melodies flow together to create a cyclical movement of vibration that becomes mine own divine rhythm.

As the wind breathes in and out of me my heart joins the rhythm and my body becomes human, standing on the earth. Other humans are all around me dancing to the music of life and creation. They move their arms and legs in strange and awkward ways. They are trying so hard to let go, to find their connection again. I see Melody in human form and she gives me a curl lipped half smile that tells me she knows who I am. I am the god Rhythm incarnate. I shake my shoulders and her smile shows teeth which entice me to give more. My arms and legs pick up the rhythm as I strengthen my connection to the divine source and she is enraptured with pleasure. She comes to me and we move together with power and grace and wild abandon.

Melody swells to overwhelm me and exudes a presence of lavish bounty ready to be devoured. A lustful devotion floods through the people and they weigh their own rhythm against her soaring melody. She gives Herself to them and Her song comes from many voices. The rhythms and melodies now turn to each other and speak of their divine connection. Some rhythms weave together to create intricate cadences and patterns. Other rhythms are competing to be the loudest and fastest. Some melodies are singing together creating layers of harmony. Other melodies are comparing whose song is more worthy of the divine. I delight in their connection and have a heavy understanding of their confusion and hurt. I am overwhelmed with the responsibility for them and for the pain they will inflict upon themselves and the world. I try to show them the way of balance. It is not a straight line standing on end. It is a circle. A falling and rising, falling and rising. Gently holding and releasing. Rolling on through eternity. Some listen. Some mock and ridicule. Others have turned to stone and are beating against each other, trying to crack themselves open. I am weighed down with painful dense love for their struggle, which is also my own. I am being crushed under my weight upon the earth. The earth is being crushed under my weight upon it. I don't want to carry this burden. I am on my hands and knees straining with the weight pressing against me.

A hand touches my back and Melody calls. I open my eyes and look up to see her. She is no longer the goddess. I ache with sadness that she is gone. She calls to me again. I can't put down the weight. Who else would carry it? She calls to me. How can I let it go? She calls to me. I remember my breath and pull in the wind. I exhale and sing a melody to her. The burden lightens and I see it disperse amongst the people. I let the wind scatter myself back to the earth. A small fragment is carried to a melody maker and I am planted into her. I have seen her before. She was listening when I taught about balance. She danced and sang her melody with others. She found a rhythm to help her remember to return to the divine. His rhythm is earnest and constant, with periods of hardening then cracking open as he returns to the melody again. She will birth four children with him. I am the last. She will carry a heavy love for each of us. Her rhythm will leave her and she will find another. He will dance with her and return her to balance.

I come back into the world and forget who I am for a time. I learn to play my rhythm before I understand what it is. But I trust it to guide me. Some don't understand my rhythm. Others understand more than I. I am overly careful and tentative around melodies. I feel the weight of my responsibility and am hesitant to play my rhythm too strong. I feel comfortable with other rhythms and my exuberance fully responds while weaving our patterns together or playing them against each other. I am drawn to a melody that marches and struts. They remind me of my own connection to the divine. I have a child with the marching melody who sings soft sweet caresses of love to everything around her. My heart breaks open as I feel her fierce tenderness.

I wish I had more tenderness in my life. The marching melody understands before I do that we do not belong together and we part. I find a melody as tender and playful as a kitten stretching in the grass, and fierce as a mountain lion. She has two children of her own. Our children play their music loudly with each other and in the world. Feeling the grinding pulse of dissonant melodies, and the exaltation of marching in time. We call each other into balance, to remind us of who we are. The divine Rhythm and Melody.