

Teaching Fire and Water

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Some days

They stare at you

Eager

And listening,

Waiting,

Following,

Silent, the classroom,

Though they might as well be chirping,

Their mouths open

Waiting for worms

Warm from fresh earth

And so now

They are with you,

With each other,

And with their own mind

All at once,

And their eyes move with you a little bit because

There is something going on behind them, moving, whirring,

They follow your steps,

Confluence

And pick up the worms in the wake,
Those words,
Warm with the heat of the fire they came from,
Not the earth but my heart,
Full of fire,
So that the words burn in me
But somewhere between
Me and those open mouths
There is a cooling
Off, so that
By the time the words drop into
Those mouths and those eyes
Those minds
I hope there is still steam
So they can feel
The fire they came from.

And you can feel the difference between
Silence confused, absent, blank,
And the blanket of a silence that holds magic,
You can feel that silence, immediately, warm,
The soft quilt silence of a wisdom just found, together,
We are all there
Because of it we are bound
And we are gazing at it together
From just a few steps ahead of it,
In awe,
In communion,

You step into that hush, or else it falls on you all,
That silence breathes in and out, winking, it lives,
You can *feel* that, you can reach out your hand and touch that
kind

Of silk silence, in the places where the stars aren't peeking
through it, and you hold,

So as not to move out from under it.

It is sacred.

And some days

You come home buzzing

Just buzzing

With the vibrations of the noises

And silences of that day and you have to lie in your bed

With your eyes closed,

But your mind spinning,

Spinning,

For half an hour

Before enough of it has seeped out of you

To be able to speak with anyone

Before your heart beats return, normal

You have to lie in your bed eyes closed mind moving

Before you have come down enough even

To be still

And rest there.

But some days

They stare at you

Confluence

And it's different
And they are not with you
And they do not jump in but resist
And you have to pull them
And they resent the whole way pulling
Taut
And on these days
Initially
There is no one else there
(Just you and the words)
And you have to pull and pull and sometimes
It works
And one by one you can feel
Them slipping in around you and they join and they are
Inevitably happy once they get there,
It cannot be otherwise,
The turn is immediate
No matter the length, the strength, of the pulling
And they smile and are full
And they wave at you and at each other
As they slip in one by one
And you can feel it
Gathering around you
And you let the pull go
And look around
And relax
And smile
And breathe

But some days

They are not resistant but gone
Some days you can get them,
Most days you can get them,
But some days they want
You to do it
All on your own and they watch
And they do not slip in but the
Entire spark,
If one is to be made,
Rests on the power of your own vitality
It has to fill the room, wide, loud,
It doesn't matter what they feel,
Every day you have to burn,
And how to start,
How to step off into that space,
Away from your comfort
And into that pain,
Tense,
For it hurts,
It *hurts*,
And it will,
And it must,
If it means that much
That way is the only,
Every day,

Confluence

And it's hard,
It's *hard*,
And the spark—yours—
Churns,
Waiting, working, burning,
To flare into flame,
And you are alone,
A mountain,
Sweating,
Dripping raindrops
Into the sea that surrounds you
The storm is so loud inside you but
The silence outside is profound
And you think
Where are they
And
If only
One would reveal
That they yearn
(I know it, I know it, but *show*—)
And you think,
It's too much
To need that each day
Your gut
Concerning your gut
Where's the worth
And the worms now
Just wriggle

They squirm
But a friend—inadvertent—
Reminds me that
What is to give light
Must endure
The burning
And I think,
Oh God,
I can burn, and burn, and burn,
And shine,
And some days it's me in the dark,
But some days,
When the lightning strikes,
I grab it,
And the storm passes,
And in the light
We are versed.

Confluence