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bill of rights for bodies when they are born on planet earth

By Molly Larkey

we have rights, but right isn't the right word for rights, because these rights are not granted by the state: they are boundless and unmitigated, and our right to them is beginningless and unyielding. they come from a time when there was no time, when we were animals, and plants, and spirits; a time when there was no separation.

these rights may also be called writes, because in inscribing these rights, we conjure the power of these marks that form our writes. their potency is felt by our hands and in our spines and their rightness is known in our chest and by our ears. the resonance of these rights is felt in every part of our bodies, so they will be a part of our body of writes moving forward and backward from now.

these writes may also be called rites, because to speak them is to invoke them as rites. the magic of rites states that to speak is to pronounce, to pronounce is to enact, and to enact is to invoke. by the transitive properties of rites, we commute rights into writes, and writes into rites; even as we learn our rights, we also learn to always know and speak these rites.

we have always had these rites but they were hidden from us, hidden in us; they are us, and we only have to say them to know them, and have the power of them. they come from being born in this body that you have, and i am, and we are in—a body of earth, air, water, and fire—living on a celestial body made of earth, air, water, and fire. these elements make up our body and the earth's body. we thus contain the irrevocable right to these rites.

we are made of earth, so it is only right to be nourished by food that is clean, fragrant, and fortified by the earth. we have been told that the earth can be bought and sold, but it's not true. the earth is free and abundant and its nature is to nourish, and all of us have the right to be nourished and strengthened by it. we emerged from the earth the same as all the others, so we will return to the earth to nourish it back again.

the air is in you and you are in the air: we move, sway, stand, ring out with the medium that is air. this is our right to air, yes, i mean to bright,

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unpolluted air. this is also our right to breath, to speech, to sound, to thought, to hold ourselves as part, and also apart. to making lines that are boundaries (to saying no), to making lines that are connections (to saying yes), to being both within and without, to being me and not you, you and also part of me.

your body is a body of water so this is your rite to be as water: to flow, slip, evaporate, sparkle, shower, fill, and hydrate. it is our right to drink the water that covers the earth; yes, i mean clean water that will fill us to our depths. it is our write to all that is watery: to fluidity, to clarity, to transparency, to profundity, to reflection, to feelings that are not to be held back (dammed), or damned. savor the feelings, drink them in, know them to be as flowing water, as we feel with the depthiest tenderness.

i know fire because i know urgency, the urgency of knowing a thing wants to be transformed because it's dead, or just that it's time. you know fire because i know it, it's telling you what you need; what you need to say, what is needed to be said, to be done, to be acted on, to be vocalized (loudly!) out loud. this is the rite to fire: to heat, and volume, and power, yes, to power. it is our right to transform, to be transformed, to tell it like it is, to know it like it is, and feel and tell the fire of it.

fire is the force that runs through us, the gleam that is the matter of me, the flare that is the spark of you. close your eyes and look; know the knowing that you are light, moving out into the world and back into you. we have the inmost right to be this light: to blaze this light, to be combustible, to feed ourselves with light, to be devoured, to bathe and stretch in light, to bestow light, to be a torch, to disseminate the light of us.

we have this rite to never forget the sacred holding of our bodies, of sharing this body with the bodies, spirits, and minds your body chooses. the fire of my body tells you the truth (lies are burning, crackling, falling away). the lie is that they can co-opt, steal, vilify, own, shame, criticize your body; even as they want to control your body, we will not allow it, not ever again. remember: your body cannot be measured or seized, it is an unbound body, it cannot be detoured.

it is my right to be other than us and still the same as you—ancients and babies, masculines and feminines, fragiles and strongs, and all the differents and sames, and opposites and alikes of us. it is your right to be the others of me, to be embodied as your body speaks you to be—strongfragile, femininemasculine, differentsame—to be a shapeshifter. to be all genders or none at all, to break gender in half or innumerable smaller pieces, to bust it right open, to exhibit it, to expose it, to play in the fragments of gender.

we have the right to think with the thinking of others, our own others, and others' others—stone thinking, ocean thinking, particle thinking, nothingness thinking—to know generosity to and from others. to know plants, to grow them and be grown by them, to know the wild knowing of animals' minds. to give back freely all the things given to us: this is our rite to generosity, which is at all times and everywhere. look around, feed it, cultivate it, the generosity is here to give from, and take to; amplify it, sprout it, spread it like sun on a brightness day.

it is our right to know the power that is the connection to all of these things and all of these things' things: to commune with, to be given to know with, to feel mystery's mysteriness with. we have this right to power in all the words for it, especially the words that are gathering, rising from the words that have been hijacked or overworked. for now, let's call it warp and weft, a vine vining, a branch branching, a root rooting. or call it (everything) because it is the beginning, middle, and end, and everything in-between.

this write is your rite to add freely to; to write rights of your own, and to share them with fighters for rights and writers of rites and riters of writes. to fight for and write more and rite more, for all of us, and all the others of us, moving backward and forward from now.

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