Poems: "The Earth is Us" and "gifts"

Mary Ann Iyer and Cai Quirk

The Earth is Us
By Mary Ann Iyer

The cells of this earth are our cells. The wind that blows across its surface is the self same air that we breathe.

Our life blood courses through our veins with no less certainty than the rivers cascading to the sea.

And what are we to make of this?

Whether we are of the earth is not the question. Rather, we should ask what part we play.

Our capacity to choose sets us apart from the other beings here.

Choice implies responsibility.

Not in the self serving way
of subduing the earth,
Rather, we must make decisions
firmly based in
the sustenance of life.

Not just longevity
for our selves,
but for the ongoing life
of the planet, herself.

The fouling of her air
is the pollution of
our lungs.
Her filthy waters
will percolate through
the tributaries of
our veins
soon enough.

To fundamentally alter
the very DNA of her structures
is to mess with
our own.

How far will we go in
the name of “progress”
before we
stop
to appreciate what is
here?

Will we destroy
it All
with the “knowledge” we have
before we realize
that the earth
is us?

*Mary Ann (MD) is a physician who leads workshops and provides individual counseling, facilitating individuals’ choices for well-being within the rich contextual interplay of their lives.*

**gifts**
By Cai Quirk

when the earth is in pain.
from so many
taking, taking, taking.
without a backward glance.
what can I give?

the caress of a fern leaf,
water to a parched garden,
joy at the sight of the moon.

food scraps to compost,
compost to earth,
renew, refresh, relive.

notice the dew,
give thanks to the stars,
jewels in the sky
bringing jewels to
the ground.

go to the garden
just to be with the plants,
in thanks for their gifts
yesterday and tomorrow.
reciprocity with the land;
give give give and a little take,
walking lightly on the earth.

what can we give
she who has so much?
humans have gifts of gratitude,
love, fixing past wrongs,
and so much more
if we only imagine.

_Cai (Leo) is an artist from Ithaca, New York and is co-clerk of NY Yearly Meetings’ Witness Coordinating Committee._
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