

**Night Vision**, a dream recitation

[sitting in front of fire, beating drum]

[eyes closed, head down]  
swimming in a viscous brine  
with canyons that plunge towards the center of the earth  
a deep topography of mental states

[eyes closed, head rising]  
on the eve of the full moon  
with the pull of a magnetic force  
the portals open wide  
like dilated pupils behind closed eyes  
this clarity came to me in my sleep

[eyes open]  
I am a shaman  
drafted by the spirits  
I've stripped down my flesh  
for a journey of the soul

I live an ordinary life  
cooking, gardening, doing ordinary chores  
like everyone else  
some of you are shamans too

[eyes closed]  
whether we see them or not  
spirits act on us  
causing events in our lives  
they can love us  
nourish us  
and eat us alive

a mild current  
an undertow  
slipping/sinking  
gasping for air

suddenly, I'm seated  
at a table lined with ribs and jaws  
a prickly sensation  
crawling down my spine

[eyes open]  
crossing the boundary of my skin  
opening the cracks in the systems  
invented to contain  
I have no church, no holy book, or statue  
just this society  
there can be no shaman without all of you

we are all linked to the world  
in a circuit of activity  
neither we, as humans  
nor our surroundings  
have full identity  
or meaning without the other

plants, and rocks, and wind, and rain  
are all imbued with spirit  
and so are we  
let us learn from nature  
birds don't try to fly—they just soar  
flowers don't work to blossom—they just bloom  
nature functions with effortless ease  
frictionless and spontaneous

but there are forces at hand  
that can grind you to a stop  
the spirits can be fickle  
swallowing whole cities  
burning entire forests  
for one man's error

but when your actions are motivated by love  
you will expend the least effort  
nature is held together by this force  
when you chase after status, money, or fame  
you waste energy  
when your actions are motivated by love  
your energy expands and accumulates  
so, take it easy and be guided by love

[eyes closed]  
and there the vision ends  
though the salty pools and sunken grounds continue  
[blinking eyes open, standing]  
I stand on this crusty mantle of earth

before this flaming, sacred tree  
and share...

the soul can leave the body  
your dreams show you so  
you are not bound inside this body  
so, let loose, go on go  
[walks off]