

PALAS[®]

Tamara Henderson, Eye in the High, 20th April – 22nd June 2024

A way of returning without going backwards

I.

Gum trees flare. The scent of oils hit the light at dusk impregnating nascent minds with bright ideas. For a moment the chatter recedes, the body opens in agreement and hungrily it feasts upon the sweet nectar of a living moment.

When you give yourself to it, it is an almost unbearable richness.

The shape of birdsong, deployed by some hidden smallness, bounces resoundingly off trees and open air and vibrates along the fine hairs that line your ear canals and describe the edges of your body.

The crisp fragility of a tree's shedding skin as you reach out and finger its edges. The past and future of the thing crunching underfoot as you gaze into the worm-like scribblings underneath. Another cryptic message to decipher: a language of recesses and lifted edges, and the curvature of small bodies who, like you, consume their way forward.

Fed full in a mere moment, you tuck your hair back behind your ear; this new material packed safely away some place within the body. You are beginning to understand how it feels, the thing that you are moving towards.

II.

Leafy tannins leach into fire heated water. Fertile soil gives way to dense clay spotted with iron deposits. Banana skins rich in phosphorus, calcium, magnesium and sodium echo a cockatoo's sulphur crest. Carbon trapped in dry grasses smokes out a ritual beginning.

You're on the move now.

Embers glisten and fade as the moon once again cuts a fine crescent against the black sky. Vapours descend and taking on weight, leak dripping down to mingle with what has accumulated there.

A muscular seed wrestles itself into life, drawing nutrients from its surrounds and feeding them to the code carried within. Written into it somewhere is a dream of exploding, of stretching, of strolling under the warm sun, and of laying down at the end, wasted and complete. These strange notions make little sense packed densely in the subterranean darkness – but coiled within they drive a hungry, itchy rhythm. Pulsing desirously.

III.

Sway rock body. Breathe in. Breathe out. Feel yourself, all noise and electric hunger. Let it be just as it is. Notice the shadow of things, as they come and go. Let your concentration rest on the spaces in between until all things are subsumed there. It is all there is and you in it.

She is with you now. Life, that warm dream, gently nudging at your edges. You only have to move out to meet it. Curl your toes. What you want to live cannot be born from nothing. Whispers must be heard, held even. Attempts must be made, and failure drunk deeply; its wisdom recycled.

It is an act of excavation, to peer so closely into a thing that one's eyes themselves quiver. The peripheries blaze and in a moment there, between frames, a mystery emerges.

A flower opens, each petal fluid with awareness as its smallest parts extend and contract to effect a gentle thickening curl. A sensual, slow destruction unpicks itself. A fruiting body pushes up through a rent in the fabric. Nameless yawning gates heralding the possibility of change.

~ Julia Dunne, March 2024