

Dancing with Creation

SKY DANCER — LOUISE B. HALFE

When the Sun dancers
blew their Eagle bones
their whistles pierced
through the leaning aspen.

From the East
an Eagle flew across the arbor.

Eyes concentrated
on the Tree of Life
knees bent,
feet stepped
to the chants and drums.

When the men dragged
the Buffalo Skulls four times
around the arbor,
released themselves
murmurs swept,
sunbeams rising from the crowd.

Others tied to the tree,
their chest pierced,
pranced backwards
and pulled
until skin broke.

Arms skewered women
wove their sweetgrass
angels dancing
as their Eagle Whistles
shrilled the welcomed release.

At the end
without food, without water
the Sun Dancers swayed
beneath the parched sun.

An Eagle flew
in from the South.

The Dancers
pushed the aspen enclosure
open
walked through the doorway
to Life.

A Call for Love

SKY DANCER — LOUISE B. HALFE

I sprawl on the living room floor
soak in the solar heat. I am
scorched.

The police drops of frozen men,
the Boushie trial,
missing and murdered men,
women and girls, apprehended children,
the uncovered burials,
residential school, the women
forced to cut
their beautiful braids,
the assault on our treaties.
An endless list.

Uprooted trees. Blazing fires
leap across the land. Burn houses.
Hard pelting rain. Raging, roaring
waters overflow banks. Flood
valley. Mudslides.
Tear highways. Bridges.
Lightning strikes. Thunderbolts
in my heart. I am an unsettled wind.

Snow clippers, blinding blizzards.
What mercy is left?

I will braid my aging hair,
wear ribbon dresses.

I will tattoo my face.

See this. The warriors
protecting their women,
children, and the old.

This land.

Armed against you.