

Ancient food for future generations...

Sherry Pictou

This poem is dedicated to the struggles of clam fishers in Canada against the privatization of fishing areas

My heart is overflowing
with Grandma Sarah
teaching us to dig clams
and as she wraps all of our harvest
in foil over the heated coals
beneath the sand
I knew this was for me
and my lifetime...

And those life times
before and after me
where shell heaps
bare the answers to our existence
in both life and death...
The clam... the beautiful clam
hidden within its intergenerational
purple blue shell:
the food of life --
ancient food for future generations...

Oh my brother...
So contented as you walk slowly
the back roads.....
With your bucket full of clams
and clam hack...

So serene and quiet
this walk of ancient paths
You carrying
so quietly
the ancestral knowledge
which the rest of us --
were too self absorbed
in the fast paced of tomorrow
thus not able to learn or feel
with our hearts, today.....

I see you there
with your shucking knife
and for a second
trying to teach me....
As Your ancient laughter
of fathers and grandfathers
before you...
Ring loud to this day
in my heart of all hearts
as I struggled to learn
this art now floating along
bay shores and inlets...
and continue to do so...
Today...