

Memory and Ancestors

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<http://admin.thecontemporaryjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Memory-Ancestors-Final.mp3>

Waxing Hardy

The night: he stretches before you
like a slow river. Calm
on the surface; hardworking underneath

You ask him all the right questions
to get the right answers
Is a zebra a horse

or is a horse a six-foot man
amongst boys & girls
who wear the same

year you were born,
as well as the first place
you ever considered home.

Where the moon
does not linger – she only
has 28 days to come back

where she started. You are far
from home. You are far. Righteous
Ancestor means righteous meaning

righteous ancestor means
May you feel the spirit of a foremother
fighting

to grab a small piece of your attention
each morning before sunrise means...
May you feel hope again meaning

you never left thinking it would
be this long
till you returned

May you be filled
with something like Nehanda's spirit –
that great foremother

whose hardy bones rose
more than once, in the valley
of Dande. May you carry on, back,

towards the land of your ancestors
Feel that spirit fighting
to grab a small piece of your attention

each morning – in the hour
before sunrise.
When it's her time,

to get full
in her cycle,
the moon brings you:

fuller hips, breasts
a deeper voice and paranoia
that you will die

alone in the land of your coloniser
Child of the soil. You say send me back
into the earth so I can come back hardy

as coneflower, as hardy as lily of the valley
but you are stuck inside
Dressed up with only downstairs to go

matching the white walls
The sunny streets outside, deserted
& with envy you watch the trees swaying,
full of birdsong, present in their roots

The moon does not linger
She only has 28 days
to come back where she started

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