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Split Species, Intertwined

The plant neurobiologist Stephano Mancuso begins his praise of plant intelligence by stating that “plants have nothing in common with us” (71). After all, our last common ancestor was over 600 million years ago.

Chemically, though, they do: The two substances most closely associated with life processes are chlorophyll, which produces the food plants need and the oxygen animals need, and hemoglobin, which transports the oxygen. The striking similarity of structure of these substances reflects their complementary roles.

From Red to Green to...

Russet crust

Viridescent filaments

earth throes

fissures from core unrest:

crust plates crumple

lava upheavals thrust up gobs of molten rock

dust thou art

We are

volcanic ooze cools to taut undulations,
igneous folded in with

sandstone in skin-tones,
rocky palimpsest

garnet mantle
silica crust
iron oxide, ruddying soil

To life on primordial Earth, oxxygen was poison.
Hemoglobin's ancestors carted it away.

Green circuitry intercedes:

Green filaments
heave
tipped blades unfurling,
galvanized by light-thirst,
heliotropic urgency

chloroplast sensors winnow light
off-source air

our species reprieved by oxygen

Tropic scale from red to green:
planet's iron-compacted core
pulls, pulls, on minerals in our bones,
sinks our toes in mud
while thoughts range
and feelings see-saw

clay, our ground, our grave
this mere *quintessence of dust*
dispersed by lifespan squall

To dust/clay/mud, humans are bound
by many ancient tales.

The Roman goddess Cura, representing Care,
fashioned a human from muck.
Jove breathed him live, saying: *let him be called human,
since he seems to be made from humus.*

From adaptations, complements emerge:
Iron in hemoglobin ruddles the blood.
Heme makes us sanguine, breathy.

This breath, a transient bequest
from gods or from the green world,
as we crawled from muck in hazy time,
fin-blades morphing to shoulder blades,
arms branching to hands that grasp
and grasp –
taking

Color-soaked
chlor-heme dyad
in sustenance duet.

.....

If a tree

if a tree beckons

list

list-en...

Once, deluged with silence
I lunged for the woods
to be alone all-one

stretched to star-field spaciousness
all sparked with shared light

beneath protective layers,
unveiled resplendence of "is"

How to confirm, conform to invitation?

I'll walk to that aged oak
stately in lineage girth
Each step I'll measure –

not plunge from lucid -
elongated breath
unbolted

I thought the tree a marker of my state
but the tree thought differently.

From oak's undulant susurrations
I knew to bare both soles to soil.

Feet earthed, leaning, shoulder blades
splayed against rugged bark, between them
the covert passage to heart-core

conjoined to ageless kenning
breath stretched acceptance
then tree-pulse oscillated into tones:

"Be red. Be green."

In-struck with core-thrum
blown back to turgid history:
heart-root yanked early
yell-back to the long-gone:
not your doll!

Sorrowfully seeking
ever-elusive
home ground

Sure, I knew **Red**:

bloodroot-stained earthling
born smoldering, during wartime
under red warrior planet's glower -
a redhead too; much tint to tamp
flame to focus, to reach ethereal

Spirit of Quercus, stream me toward Verdant worlds
calm ~ assuage ~ temper me
let me occupy that range
from red to green copiously

In chakra parlance
spectral colors stack upwards
refining frequency potentials:

Red, root chakra, earth-tether
Orange, deep belly, bridge to family and clan
Gold plexus, self, resplendent when peeled of ego
then **Green**, heart chakra, house of compassion

... how green seeps through red as red rises

Transforming Seed, sprout from Red ground
Distilling flame, burn through to Green profusion

Rubescant heart pendulous in viridian nest
Flesh-ruby pulsing through core-drum

I bore from the forest a seed rubicund of a heart unstuck for now

reddish green

List to the Leaves

rustling: list-en in

Our chlor-eyes trap sun vigor
slide liquefied sunlight down tiny channels
into a larger stream, root-drawn,
treasures we trade for hydration.

We brandish viridian
so you can flow ruddy.

We leaf.
When our cells reverberate,
we swivel into calyx-wrap to foster buds,
enwrap our cousin's stretching glory -

We honor each phase,
the bud's slow or swift unfolding.
After, when flower petals
splay, still aromatic,

we revive our offering:
entice sunlight,
exhale your breath-food.

We give back go back to
ground transmogrify.
We don't fear falling to clay.
Once we dissolve to elementals,
the roots can take us in again.

This brief wafting, our wing.