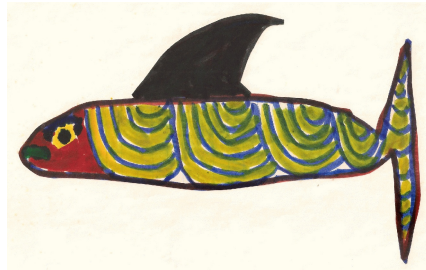


CHAPTER THREE YELLOW COACH



There was to be a Council. The natural world know.

As the setting sun begins to turn the sky a brilliant orange red, the beach was quiet. On the sand, surrounded by glistening palm trees, is a 19th century yellow English barouche. A greyhound sits inside, a coyote on top, next to a yellowlegs, canary, cuckoo, sparrow, bee, mouse and two rats. A crocodile, lobster, catfish, snail (sitting on the back of a blue footed booby), moon jelly, crab, shrimp, oyster, cherrystone and razor clam, sea urchin, green sea turtle, octopus, pelican and albatross are quiet in the midst of surrounding lush sandhill sage, primrose and yellow verbena. A hummingbird and worm sit on a starfish, next to a seahorse. Offshore, a sperm whale and dolphin circle slowly around a large arch rock.

PALM TREES . . . in unison.

“We are PATIENT.

We’re here to listen. Let’s start with a fish....out of water.”

CATFISH

“I am BRYCE.

Humans need maps to navigate. If they destroy themselves, we can care for the planet.”

SHRIMP

“I am SUSAN B.

The young and old of their species seem to relate and communicate with other species more easily than they do with their own.”

STARFISH

“I am QUIESCENT.

Oxygen is being taken from the water and gas added to it. We don’t know if we can adapt to the new acid. There’s an imbalance in marine life, oceans are being poisoned.”

SPERM WHALE

“I am NAST.

Do they not understand the power of sound and vibration? Did they learn their morse code from us? They kill us year after year. If they’ll listen, we’ll help.”

CARP

“I am WHEREIBELONG.

Sea creatures are responding to temperature changes in the water caused by climate change ten times as fast as creatures on land, even though the underwater temperature change is one third as great. Many of us have no choice but to relocate.”

CROCODILE

“I am CRISPIN.

Humans don’t know how to listen as well as they know how to talk. It’s difficult for them to admit they could be wrong, to be open to a different way of thinking.”

MOON JELLY

“I am LUNA.

We’ve been here for six hundred and fifty million years. Without brains, hearts, eyes or gills, we communicate through design, something their species doesn’t yet understand.”

BLUE FOOTED BOOBY (with SNAIL on his head)

“I am BURWELL.

No other life form but the human species poisons the earth that sustains it.”

YELLOWLEGS

“I am LINDY.

We can teach them a great deal about flight. They have a long way to go.”

PELICAN

“I am SPINOZA.

Everything in the natural world has a purpose. Each species has its instincts, patterns, essences and destinies. It’s not for us to imitate the humans species; it’s not for them to imitate us.”

SNAIL

“I am LITTLE ROUNDTOP.

We’re been here for six hundred million years. We can sleep for three years. Since we can’t hear, we use our sense of touch. Do they know their purpose, why they’re alive?”

BEE

“I am FATIMA.

Are they aware how much of their food is pollinated by insects, bees and mammals?”

WHITE MOUSE

“I am MERTON.

How they treat one another is confusing. They are reckless with each other’s trust. To find remedies to deal with their self inflicted stress, they experiment on us. I lost a leg in a trap...but got away.”

BROWN RAT

“I am GAY.

In Kenya, we were eating corn to stay alive. The farmers sent back the poison they’d been given. They wouldn’t kill us. We will help.”

WHITE RAT

“I am STANTON.

Do humans kill us, as if we’re doing something wrong, because they think we can’t reason?”

SEA URCHIN

“I am BEAUVOIR.

They’ll change in their own time, not ours; when they’re ready, not when we are. We can’t change them.”

RAZOR CLAM

“I am MAUGHAM.

Humans won’t stay with changes they think were forced upon them. We could give them one opportunity; after that, no more.”

SEA HORSE

“I am DAD.

I agree with MAUGHAM. I’m male, get pregnant and have children. You can only change what you understand.”

CANARY

“I am COALMINE.

Animals don’t care what others think of them. Why do humans? We should warn them, before it’s too late.”

COYOTE

“I am SOPHIST.

Some of their species believe intelligence is measured by their ability to deceive other humans. Since we can deceive as well as they do, why don’t they think we’re smart?”

ALBATROSS

“I am MISUNDERSTOOD.

Many of their species care about the safety of the planet, animals and plants, devote their lives to the health, treatment and safety of the Earth and its life forms.”

GREYHOUND

“I am WILSON.

Humans need machines to tell them what we know instinctively, the arrival of storms and seismic events.”

LOBSTER

“I am QUIXOTE.

Fortune leaves always some door open.”

CHERRYSTONE CLAM.

“I am HAPPY.

We’ll help.”

SPARROW

“I am LAMABS.

Is it true their abuse, cruelty and violence of their own kind often starts with cruelty and violence to animals?”

CUCKOO

“I am DIDEROT.

Too much information!”

WORM

“I am GOESAROUND.

Do humans understand every action has a consequence?”

HUMMINGBIRD

“I am SHIKIBU.

Can humans reduce their body temperature and slow their heart beat to stay alive in cold weather? I know birds, cats, dogs and rabbits who spend time with the old of the human species. They are loved deeply in return Let’s help them.”

OCTOPUS

“I am CLOSEHOLD.

I have blue blood and three hearts. Many humans don’t think before they speak. Language has limits and boundaries. Are humans confused by words, concepts, interpretations and theories? Is language the only way they communicate?”

CRAB

“I am MONTESSORI.

With eight legs, two claws, no backbone, I walk sideways. Human and animal bodies react differently. I think their young can learn to value life forms other than their own.”

LIONFISH

“I am JANOS.

Humans have just discovered the Universe is one hundred million years older than they thought it was.”

DOLPHIN

“I am EISELY.

Humans believe what they think. They know little about their brain, what it remembers, what it forgets. They know there’s a conscious and subconscious mind. Do they know, unaware of space and time, the subconscious mind has logical contradictions? They don’t begin to understand their abilities and potential. We would like to help.”

OYSTER

“I am IMAGO.

I start out as a male and end as a female. I change my sex every year. When something irritates me, I close my shell and spit all over whatever’s annoying me. Humans put a high value on the result. We could begin by seriously irritating their species. Perhaps, over time, they’ll value the result.”

PHYTOPLANKTON

“I am NON SIBI.

I am the most essential food unit for life on Earth Being forced to travel forty kilometers every year for the past forty years, I am tired of moving.”

GREEN SEA TURTLE

“I am NIETZSCHE.

It’s time for us to decide.”