

would a thank you be enough?

have i been kind to you today, oh water
as you float ravens in an apple
that holds the whirlwind in my soul
tight with garlands of mud and dirt
that weave my hands as i drink

have i ever thanked you
as you pave steady my fugitive paths
when the hammering nights come
in the phantom of factories
rationing my intimacy to you
rationalising that the skies' gifts
were only for those with money
but i know that the rain reigns above royals
that their riches were abandoned by the birds
with their wings poised, hoisting tsunamis
waging storms upon delusions
rushing to return to the roaring river
that thunders to sooth my suffocating neck

have i ever thanked you, oh water
that time when my grandmother cried
begging the people who imprisoned you in banks and bottles
she said "you can ration everything but please
please don't ration water upon my grandchildren"
even then, when she could barely speak
you held her with the saltwater that embraced her eyes
have i thanked you for that, oh water?

in the ebbs and flows of my veins,
with surfaces falling apart
with selves crumbling down,
long have i lived without listening
to the laces of moonlight
that warbles the longings of waterfalls
nesting in my chest
whistling waves and winds
rendering the concept of humanity obsolete
calling me back to the river

and let me say this clearly
there isn't enough passageway for our river-kins,
loads from mining are poisoning their homes
so the eels and the trouts and the otters are disappearing
river straightening has devastated the salmons
to make way for the ever-larger container ships
industrial manures and fertilisers are choking the waterways
deporting the beavers beyond the barbed wired borders.

i used to walk with my grandfather to a nearby stream
it was encased with toxins that painted 'development'
surrounded by the pesticides of 'civilisation'
he said "dreams used to drink from this stream"
the day he passed away i passed it on to my little brother,
"dreams used to drink from this stream"

would a thank you, then, be enough?
as you drink your next glass of water
would a thank you be enough?
'Thank you's are violent here if you ask me
i don't believe in that 'thank you'

i believe in the swimming flows of gratitude,
the ebbs and ebbs and flows and flows of my veins,
and the nerves that run on the Neckar
with surfaces falling apart and selves crumbling down,
stirring the waters with my bare ears
to the laces of streams under moonlight
warbling the longings of waterfalls
nesting in my chest, whistling waves and winds

calling me back to the river
where dreams drink from the streams
where i have always belonged

2021
to the Neckar