

POEM



breathe out
my breath..out ..spreads my spirit..

breathe in
i breathe in ... your spirit

connections are made

dear big s Science

little s science here¹
remember me?
we shared a tea back when you were *scientia*
scientia latin for knowings

knowings not knowledge
the -ing connects generations past with generations yet to be
alive with spirit

we had more in common when you were *scientia*
may i (re)fresh your memory?
(re)member...

little s science
i am knowings relationships connections interconnections spirit connections
i am equity and equality not hierarchy or dominance
as little s science i embrace all within the circle all equal all with openness to give and receive
open heart & open mind (Eagle Speaker)

little s science
each letter equal
no dominance over hierarchy over control over
little s science
working together towards a whole knowings about with the whole
all

all my relations

respecting our responsibility to our universal family (King, 2003)
generations past present future
knowings from our teachers with 2 legs and 4 with scales feathers fur claws hoofs

¹ this is my journey of (re)connection with my Cree English Polish roots, buried deep within the soil, hidden for safe keeping...

knowings from all that move and breath in and out
 and all that don't
 coyote kokum fern rock turtle naa—mooo² father star
 knowings
 knowings from all with all together

big s Science
 you have changed
 you now act like a Proper Noun
 your big S hovers over little i
 you exert your big s Science when you need to
 like you have control of your Capitalization
 Capitalism

big s Science you have changed from *scientia* knowingssss
 say it feel it *scientia knowings* it dances with my tongue
 knowledge big K K K the sharp sound cuts
 carves out and discards the little the subjective
 the stories under the rocks and with the kokums
 Knowledge big K reduced boiled down cut apart curated generalized
 knowledge of everything
 needing to know everything
 assuming everything can be has to be *needs* to be known

knowledge – “something to be possessed and accumulated” (Peat, 2008, p.55)
 a static noun
 it feels like block hard ridged cold white
 teachers fill students with these blocks of knowledge
 students receive knowledge fill the bucket (Freire, 2005/1970)
 only to regurgitate it
 to fill in square after square of limited choices on a test

where do the blocks go after?
 maybe some are (re)collected
 used to reinforce the rigid standardized checklist for post-secondary admission
 (re)collected copied pasted inserted onto the mounting wall that separates the academy
 from community
 from humanity
 from knowings s s s

² From Piikani Elder Reg Crowshoe, na-moo, meaning bee in Blackfoot, it's not just a word, not just written, but when said, naaa-mooooo mimics the sound of a bee, the interactions of spirit between the bee and the ear, hearing and connecting to the song of the bee (p.c.)

big s Science you have a crush on a lust for over knowledge
 a crush on a lust for over the power of Knowledge big K
 knowledge to control with its power over nature
 hierarchy of man over nature (Hatcher, Bartlett, Marshall, A., & Marshall, M., 2009)
 control her
 make her obey
 put her in a box if she doesn't

the box

a metaphor for big s Science
 with walls to separate ||| the observer ||| the observed |||
 subject ||| object
 but the box of Science knowledge is closed separated segregated
 to be observed looked at
 watched

hard Science
 hard to argue with negotiate with
 hard to crack
 hard to have a cup of cedar tea with and get to know it better
 hard to woo
 hard to connect with through those walls

big s Science

you say the human distorts
 alters knowledge with its impurity faults imperfections
 big s Science you make me feel dirty unwanted
 i am a disruption to your academic results
 remove the human from the equation the tests
 get into the box
 hold on.... who's in the box what's in the box?
 little s
 big S
 the walls are too high distorting
 who/what is in who/what is out?

breathe

you watch

i feel

i feel your eyes your gaze
 all you seem to have is your eyes

they have become your superpower
 enhanced through the microscope and telescope (McLuhan, 1962)
 you mechanize technosize your vision
 reduce enhance focus

generalize

finalize

you lost the human in your eyes

big s Science, your hierarchy controls anything and everything lower case
 how did you also manage to control my senses?

plato descartes galileo

vision allied with reason logic the ideal

sight became distanced from other senses (Classen, 1997)

increasing with the rise of the modern age

photos lens instruments observation – the surveillance of Science

> memories stories experiences spirit

the gaze of the scientist = acquisition of knowledge (Foucault, 1973)

big s Science you removed my ears fingers tongue
 am i just a specimen to you? put the sample in the box

those samples/senses are for humans

lower to the ground

less evolved

without the shiny plasticity of modern white

damnit descartes you have given me cartesian anxiety (Bernstein, 1983)

darwin land bridges primate evolution lucy

the creation stories of big s Science

value support (re)produce power and dominance through hierarchy and privilege

struggles are *seen* as weak

the strong are rewarded by passing on their genetics

the winners thumbs up

skywoman turtle island connection between cosmos and earth mother

collaboration and respect for all within the circle

the creation stories of little s science

with not over

together

no losers

within the stories with the land struggles are vital

inniee matueeee- a hearty grass of the prairies

to reach the sun had to struggle through the
 packed down earth from the buffalo
 to grow thrive and provide food for the buffalo (Crowshoe, 2019)
 the circle is complete

the circle is interrupted

the great buffalo hunt sparked by big c Colonization
 to remove many native people's vital source of food shelter clothing ceremonies...
 to control
 to win over the land and animals and people of the land

without the struggle
 without the buffalo
 the inniee matueeee disappeared (Crowshoe, 2019)

with big s Science's vision as its dominant sense
 how is there so much blind trust in this capital S?

discovery conquest exploitation distribution appropriation (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012)
 you have colonized commodified my connection with earth mother
 "a forceful d i s r u p t i o n
 of a set way of knowing and doing" (Eagle Speaker, 2019)

uprooted the people whose lives spirits generations live with amongst the land
 amongst little s science

"remove the indian"
 "disconnect them from the land civilize them"
 "educate them with big s Science"

uprooted roots exposed vulnerable
 do you know how it feels when your roots are snipped?
 when your nerves are snipped exposed raw?

transplanted
 replanted
 unstable unsteady without the security of the foundation of your roots
 no choices must depend on rely on others

dominant others with mechanical roots
 must rely on others for support (Donald, 2009)

sometimes only as memories blood memories
 maybe not your own memories from generations past
 that travel through spirit

not flesh

through story

not the written word

through radical hope

(re)planted into the garden of big s Science

man-made garden

without spirit

but with fences walls barriers to control and observe

my spirit retreats

transported to new home

unsafe

marginalized

analyzed

numbered

named

(re)named

you call me fnmi

it hurts my lips and my tongue to say

say it out loud ... FNMI

twisting my name into poky letters

i don't recognise myself anymore

fnmi

who am i?

where am i?

when am i?

you might as well give me my number back at least then i am individual

not generalized into a group without meaning

can we work together?

again?

(re)concile

back when scientia

(re)ignite

little s science

(re)member

and big s Science

were

friends?

were

relations?

(re)concile this truth

truths

not big t Truth

truths plural
 isn't that what this is all about?
 your truth my truth our truths the truths of the land
 can we (re)member (re)validate truths lost through
 colonization capitalism commodification capitalization
 the truths that have been removed stolen grabbed kidnapped
 taken from their home land mothers
 uprooted
 (re)rooted
 never the same
 but earth mother has nurtured these severed roots
 kept their hidden truths safe
 like mothers do

to (re)connect to
 truths acquired through knowings

protocols

all ways of knowings have protocols to acquire truths

and taught passed on by knowledge keepers

big s Science
 knowledge keepers— professors academics
 recognized by peers (community) through certifications publications presentations
 written words
 to guard the protocols methods rigor the written word

little s science
 knowledge keepers are
 respected recognized by people within the community
 gifted with relationships knowings
 to keep knowings safe passing them on through relationships created through trust
 reciprocity
 knowledge keepers
 certifications aren't on paper but gifted through song story bundles ceremony
 visions

protocol
 community accepted processes
 for coming to knowing truth / truths
 (Czuy & Eagle Speaker, 2019)

big s Science

your protocol as accepted by the (academic) community

begins with tuition commodity

expectations of submissions papers written words

submit obey submit

with teachings to be received

teaching towards teaching to

down to

student being filled with knowledge

students being taught taught down to

knowledge

as protocols mandated processes to acquire truths

scientific method standardized method

to question reduce analyze generalize replicate present

verification validation?

recognition only through

publication of words numbers statements

capitalized statements

publication / words on paper/ words on screens = validation

statements of big k Knowledge

all working towards upwards increasing validation

certification

paper stamp words titles those sought after letters

b a b s c

m a m s c

p h d

permission granted to control over

to enhance the rigor

uphold withhold the standards

...of the box

little s science

protocol as accepted by community

as a way to acquire truths with and from knowledge keepers

protocol towards the journey of being entrusted with knowings
 begins with an offering
 tobacco³

reciprocity respect gratitude to earth mother
 reciprocity respect gratitude to knowledge keeper

reciprocity respect gratitude to generations past present future
 tobacco— smoke from tobacco⁴- connection to the spirit world
 a contract to speak the truth from heart from spirit
 humility of what we do not know
 openness to the unknown

to nourish life relationships knowings tobacco truth

these strong relationships the roots that anchor the process of protocol

relationships stories truths
 story of the land cosmos
 of past generations

creation stories
 moral stories
 everyday stories
 miracle stories

stories told not read
 listened to felt experienced connected with

not recorded
 no pen no paper no tapes no computers
 senses and memories and experience as personal records
 stories are gifts of truth

³ Tobacco is a sacred plant to many First Nations and Métis communities across Turtle Island (North America), but not all. Different communities have different traditions based on the land they are on. This reference is from oral teachings from Blackfoot and Plains Cree Elders.

⁴ The smoke here refers to burning the tobacco, either in a smudge (a ceremony, often including other sacred medicines such as sweetgrass, sage, or cedar, burning in an abalone shell where the smoke takes the prayers to Creator), or in a ceremonial pipe. Smoke is not inhaled.

truth from generations of experience on
 with
 amongst
 within
 the land
 knowing from stories through generations of knowings
 stories dripping with knowings
 soaked in understanding of land
 heavy with spirit
 experienced learned only through story
 no paper no written words to see
 only spirit senses experience
 (Archibald, 2008)

not unlike big s Science
 stories as knowings passed down orally through generations
 mistakes humility learning experiential learning
 repetition
 inference prediction
 observations
 pattern recognition prediction
 truths as
 subjective
 contextual
 sensory
 based in relationships
 with land
 community
 self
 spirit
 but
 stories are held close now
 severed roots of stories are guarded cared for
 but often retreat
 trauma from past
 intergenerational trauma
 trust is now difficult
 trust is now earned
 stories are gifted NOT taken
 NOT told TO but WITH

big s Science
 you come into my "lab" earth mother

 you don't even knock or offer tobacco or pray
 where are your offerings
 i didn't hear "all my relations"
 did you say your name for creator to hear?
 you just walk in assuming your (academic) credentials and titles give you access
 access to gather truth but little t truth
 you try to understand little s science truth
 through the protocol of big t Truth big s Science
 you impose your recording devices you don't even ask
 instruments that distance your body your senses your culture
 from little t truth
 trying to gather sample collect quantify validate little t truth
 scientific method
 but... these protocols are for big s Science big t Truth
 why do you assume you can use your protocols
 to find my little s science little t truth

 to little s science
 this is like if i entered your lab in my kokums moccasins and ribbon skirt
 with ceremonial tobacco to offer as protocol to create a path towards truth
 to build relationships of reciprocity with the professor your knowledge keeper
 to gain trust
 in the hopes
 sometime
 when the time is right
 to be gifted stories
 of truth of big t Truth
 your truth but through my protocols....

 when i am allowed to thrive in my little s science world
 i am never alone
 spirits from generation past and future guide me
 animals plants the cosmos
 teach me about survival tell me stories through their actions interactions
 my senses and observations and intuition build creativity from the land
 i observe

i experience
 i make mistakes
 i laugh
 i learn
 i make connections with the spirits of the land animals trees cosmos
 connections knowings
 i am never alone
 we are always together equal in the circle

often this is not reality
 little s science has been living in a flip floppity world every sunrise
 little s science has been living without its human
 without its senses
 without its animal ancestors
 without its medicines
 without its knowledge keepers amongst the cosmos

awkward
 lost
 confused
 uprooted rerouted

big s Science i hope like me you feel like we are (re)acquainted now
 friends co-creators
 together on a journey
 (re)membering creating
 looking past experiencing present hoping
 radically hoping
 dreaming towards the next sunrise
 together

big s Science
 can we learn through both our worlds? together?
 maybe sometimes i can use my little s science protocols
 and teach you little s science truths
 eager to learn offering tobacco creating relationships
 maybe visit during the new moon my spirit is stronger in the dark
 my senses to knowings are stronger in the dark

open to coming to knowing
 together
 open to new
 open minds open hearts

all my relations

* * * *breathe in* * * * *

authors note:

as i write this, type this, my spirit continuously fights with the controlling powers of colonialism
 through technology
 through the typed word
 assuming, no, pushing its controls over which words are to be “proper nouns”
 forced capitalization
 controlling which words therefore can exude more power through capitalization
 it takes me three or four attempts to type a small i
 i i i i what if i don’t want that capital letter? it’s for the big S scientists, the big P philosophers
 it’s just me my ancestors and all my relations
 but we are all equal we will sit together, equal, amongst the lower-case

i fight the controls of formatting

font 12

calibri new times roman arial

meh. they don’t amuse me, caress my sight, make me want to read more

every u j p is the same

copied pasted

yawn

sometimes, a letter or a word feels different to me, it needs a different font.

i will listen to its request

spaces tabs alignment pre-formatted, difficult to re-format

automatic bullet points raises my anxiety

let’s step back for a moment.... “bullet” points? really?

i type this to share

to share with eyes and ears and hopefully hearts and spirits of those who blindly abide by these

parameters restrictions rules boxes

for those who wouldn’t think to question

who are scared to question

who have never questioned...

all my relations and inspirations

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Kori is Cree English Polish, born by the banks of the Peace River in Treaty 8. She recently completed her PhD in Education, focused on *Storying Mathematics*, where the mathematics within Indigenous knowings is validated and its depth recognised by learning with the land and through story as gifted by Knowledge Keepers.