Blind justice

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Ts’leil Waututh, Chaytoose, Snaq’w
The mountains rise behind my ancestors
And disappear in the sale of them
Orchestrated by a department that seeks
Their vanquishment - $25.00 becomes millions in the blink of an eye
$25.00 becomes hunger in the next blink
Becomes inadequate in the next blink
Becomes the murder of cedar, sea vegetables, Ouske, whale and sockeye
As I struggle to mature without food
I am sorry too Mr. Harper

Sustained Violence
We could have recovered from small pox
We had Xway-Xway
We had medicine
We had healing songs and dances
But they were banned

Violation
We could have recovered
We had friends
Christian friends
But they too were banned
My relations were banned from speaking
Organizing or fighting for land rights
Fishing rights,
The right to sing and dance
To raise our children
To educate them

We could have included you in our ceremony
Of facing ourselves,
Recovering ourselves
Transforming ourselves
But our ceremonies were banned.

Still, I am not tragic
Not even in my addicted moments
A needle hanging from the vein of my creased arm
I was not tragic
Even as I jump from a boat in a vain attempt to join my ancestors
I am not tragic

Even in my disconnection from song, from dance,
I am not tragic
Even in seeing you as privileged,
As an occupier of my homeland in my homeless state
Even as men abduct as I hitchhike along these new highways
To disappear along this lonely colonial road
I refuse to be tragic

My body has always understood justice
Everyone eats and so we included you
There is no word for exclusion,
So your whiteness is not threat

We have lived for 11,000 years on this coastline
This is not the first massive death we have endured
We girded up our loins,
Recovered and re-built

We are builders,
We are singers,
We are dancers
We are speakers
And we are still singing
We are dancing again
We are speaking in poetry
In story, in film

In the millennia that we have lived here there are constants
The tide will retreat and it will return
The fishes that are threatened will return
The people who died during those epidemics are returning
The plants, the trees, the animal world will recover
It may take another Tsunami of the sort that nearly killed us all
It may take earthquakes and storms
But the earth, the waters, the skies, the plants and the animals will return

I am a witness
I am inspired by the earth’s response to her desecration
A tsunami cleanses the earth
A hurricane re-arranges rivers
An earthquake is an objection
And we will all have to face ourselves,
Face our sense of justice
To include all life

We will need to nourish our imagination
To include a new equality
And summon our souls, our hearts and our minds to a justice,
which includes all life