

The Errant Children Of Mother Earth



Tom Young

Before the People, there was Grass. And the Grass invited the Sky to enrich the Earth with its Rain and Sunlight, and Earth and Sky were joined together in the Grass. And the Grass clothed the Earth with Beauty and preserved it for the People yet to come.

Those who came first dwelt in harmony with the Grass, harvesting the animals which fed on it, and their hearts were lifted by its beauty. For they had understanding of the Earth, though they were without learning out of books.

But those who followed did not understand, and ravaged what was theirs to use. In sorrow the Earth bled, and desolation replaced beauty. And the ruin which the People wrought became their Cross to bear.

Chastened, they sought understanding of the Earth, the Sky, the Rain, the Sunlight, and the Grass, and Beauty lived again. The Cross was lifted from their shoulders and they were content.

It was in the Land of the Wide Skies that this came to pass.

When atoms whirled and chaos came to order, our planet, lifeless, rolled through heaven, with only the stars, and a great potential.

The hot ball sizzled through the clouds and, after ages, cooled enough so rain could fall.

The depths became the seas, and the stony mountains sang with the voice of water running over rocks.

By some dim shore the will to live, the urge to grow found tenuous form and Earth took on its meaning.

One cell, then two, then more and differentiation to sense the light—so began the long, long chain of adaptation.

In desert places grew thorny plants and spiny creatures, in forests tree-dwellers and browsing beasts. On the great continental plains wherever grass wove her garment for the naked earth, the grazers chewed their cuds.

In the primeval pastures, streams ran clear, and clean winds blew, and nomad man came to follow the herds, adapting to the prairie as it was.

Then came from other lands ploughmen who had learned to mold the environment to their will. They had learned to plant, to own, to want more from the earth than simple sustenance.

They divided the prairie among them and ran their marking fences. Each man could do what he liked with his own piece, and wrest from the quiet earth all that he could take.

Then the drought came, and the winds. The people choked, and wept, and broke their hearts amid the desolation. Only the hoppers prospered. When rain fell, it slashed the poor bared earth and raged away in thieving torrents.

Chastened, man began to grasp the eternal lesson of all life—that to flourish, one must cooperate with his environment.

If her errant children learn, our mother, Earth, is willing to forgive.

Forgiven and absolved, man feels a love he had not known before.

He considers the needs of the Earth as well as his own, and makes a place for beauty on the land and in his heart.

The dinosaurs came and went. The mammoths came, and went. Man came, and even now may be hastening his going with his wicked weapons and his heedless ways.

Even as he goes, the Earth will persist, and the grass, and once again will the streams run clear and the winds blow clean.

If man learns, in time, to live in harmony with wind and rain and sun and trees and grass and his own human kind and all the things of Earth, he, too, like the turtle and the possum, may persist, and live a million years.



Tom Young



Ray Fudge