



Pawaatamihk

Artemis Fire

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I didn't always love you.

Sometimes I remember your visits.

You always bring others with you, and I wonder about your seemingly random, sometimes questionable, choices. Occasionally you bring someone so desirable I can't resist; you know how those nights go.

Other times, those you bring are terrifying and dangerous—it's like you pick up anyone you see along the way. Where do you find such creatures?

But it's those special visits, the ones where you bring Old Ones, Knowledge Keepers, the kind beings that offer teachings and guidance, that are such a Blessing; *Tapwe*.

And sometimes, in the middle of your visit, I suddenly realize that it's you, and then the paddle is in my hand, and I get to choose. Lifting off the ground to fly feels so liberating, and I often find my feet reaching for the lands of the Hawaiians. But just as suddenly, you will hide your face again, leaving me paddleless, back in your reality. Yours, mine...

There was a time I would have banished you if I could. You brought so much pain and darkness with you. You spoke a language I didn't understand then, in a world where I thought I was alone.

I understand some of your language now, though I am not yet fluent, in a world where I am never alone.

I am open to your gifts and try to unwrap them shortly after you deliver them, sometimes throwing away the container they come in as quickly as I can, other times cherishing your choice of wrapping.

There was a time when our Ancestors knew your language fluently, knew your Medicine, knew how to walk with you.

I long for your gifts, for more of the Old teachings;

Pawaatamihk: visit gently tonight, please.

Ekosi.

Biography

Artemis Fire (she/they/wiya) is Red River Métis and grateful to be a visitor on the unsundered territories of the *ləkʷəŋən* speaking peoples. As a Two-Spirit, cisgender educator, Artemis believes that we are all on a learning journey and we all have something to teach.

Artemis highly values the teachings she has received from Indigenous knowledge keepers, Old Ones (Elders) and young people. Artemis is a dreamer.
