

## **There is room.**

Erynne M. Gilpin

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There is a moose in the living room  
And a buffalo in the bedroom  
A polar bear on the porch  
And the northern lights in my womb

I close my eyes and breathe in family traplines and big footprints left under willow boughs

I can smell the north in my dreams  
it lives in my pockets and is sewn into the fabric of my home  
It lives in clear waters in my future memories

My bones are here  
My bloods are here  
Red rivers of courage, ceremony, and dignity

My kitchen is warm and smells like thunder  
All of my grandfathers are at the table listening to their teachings

All my grandmothers are outside building a fire and my daughter is gathering kindling

All of the women are holding me  
Timing my contractions  
And digging a hole for my afterbirth  
Red rivers continue

As daughters of the north  
The cold winds keep us awake  
The land is my bones my bones the lands

My children are rolling in berries and laughing in the sunshine  
This is not a dream  
This is futures unfolding

Awakening is not a process  
It is an entity  
Of prayers and dreams unfolding and cutting across the sky

I am breathing in this space  
Steaming under the poplars

Reaching for the north  
With everyone in my home

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## Biography

Community Connection Statement: Erynne M. Gilpin is a mixed Michif (The Pas, MB, and Member of the Manitoba Métis Federation [MMF]) educator and filmmaker. Family names and kinship lines include: Chartrand, Ducharme, Ledoux, Kamikak, Bostonnais Pagman, Wewejikabawik, Falcon, Grant, Ducharme, and Houle. Pierre “Bostonnais” Pagman Jr and Marie Wewejikabawik are among four Michif families who established the St. Laurent Métis community. Her family fought Michif Nationhood and Indigenous sovereignty across every generation: from the Battle of Seven Oaks & Frog Plain (Pierre Falcon & Cuthbert Grant) to honoured Veterans (WWII: Chartrands of the Pás/Summerberry trapline). Gilpin currently works in the areas of Indigenous education, anti-oppressive film-making, and land-based wellness.

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