

***A Land Known For Its Beauty* by Twyla Malchow-Hay**

A land known for its beauty

Growing, changing, breathing

Rich with life of natural wonders

Flowing with the waters origins of species drank from

Consumed clean water

Flooding the flourishing land

Beautiful, plentiful

For millions of years

Affluent with history

The same land our ancestors walked upon

Complicated and tangled with deep roots beneath the surface

Home to our nation's natives

And the ones who came from across seas to thrive

A witness to tension, disease, war

Two people meant to share the land

Fought for the claim

Secrets brewed in the darkest parts of a man's mind

Curious of the potential future

Top secret confusions stole the land

The public unsure of what lied ahead

Soon enough

Establishments destroyed

The towns the settlers blossomed out of nothing but hard work

Gone in the blink of an eye

Isolated and changed for the worse
Selfishness and greed brought mother Gaia to her knees
Strategies to kill our fellow beings
Our brothers and sisters across the gaping seas of salty waters
Not so far away they were
Not so different
Yet we dropped our nation's secrets into their hands
Only to blow apart the connective tissue of our land
This land
The land we grew from
Only to leave behind nothing but shadows
A world brought to silence
This once preserved and bountiful earth
Pumped full of the evils where only man's darkest desires hide
Leaking under the earth's crust
Far beneath the surface
Smothering the river's flow
Brought to a boil, radioactive, toxic
Killed dreams of a future full of lush, green, streaming life
Destroying a product of nature
An element that was meant to be
Plots kept in secret
Even from the 5000 working for a way to get by
Not knowing the damage
Tricked into believing they were doing good

Testing became routine
Slowly leaking the radioactive poison into our earth's bloodstream
A vein to the system
Beloved Columbia
All for plutonium, the element containing our safety
So they say
Pulled in to cool, released to destroy
Helping build our nation stronger
We are supposed to love our country right?
Put our hands out front and push when the going gets rough
But what about the secrets they pushed under the rug
Not knowing what "our people" have truly done
Even the people in power
Our heroes
Our leaders
The ones holding our futures in their hands
Ordering more
Needing more
Craving the cold metallic feel of power between their fingers
Conquers of death
And I thought they were in those positions to protect us
But only to destroy the land our ancestors lived from
The water they revolved life around
The land made inhabitable
Contaminated with the poison of power

Thousands of helping hands to clean up the mess

That our "heroes" left behind

Preparing for a future

Saving what little we can

Before it's too late

Years and years of dedication

Striving to revive a land known for its beauty

The source of beauty and life

Rolling in its waves