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## End of the Universe 12/21/12 For My Father

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# End of the Universe 12/21/12 For My Father

**Abstract**

This poem and its accompanying introduction address the 2012 EuroAmerican-settler hysteria over their misreading of the Mayan nation's 13<sup>th</sup> Ba'k'tun (cosmic calendar) expiring. At the core of indigenous cultures is the ethic of continuance, life, and wholeness—not devastation.

**Keywords**

13th Ba'k'tun, Mayan calendar, indigenous cultures, creative writing

**Disciplines**

Creative Writing | Ethnic Studies | Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies | Poetry

# End of the Universe 12/21/12 for my Father

Stephanie A. Sellers

*As the astronomers of our current era tell us, the rare and powerful planetary alignment of Saturn, Jupiter, Uranus, and Pluto that moved into place around the Earth Mother several years ago has created irreversible and dramatic changes among nations, individual lives, and within the earth herself. On the winter solstice of 2012, the 13<sup>th</sup> B'ak'tun of the Maya expired and another cycle of time began. When my Native father (Cherokee/ Shawnee) died suddenly that fateful morning, for me it was only fitting that a man who had done extraordinary things with his life would leave on such a powerful day. I believe he was needed in the Cosmic Spirit World to help turn the great wheel of change manifesting a world better aligned with the Divine Creatrix, with Changing Woman's and Sky Woman's original visions of wholeness. When people ask me how an illiterate, destitute Indian man accomplished what my father did, I just say, "Courage and lots of Magic." To me, he embodied the spirit of the mid-winter king: no matter how many times he fell into darkness, like the sun, he always returned. This observation is at the cultural core of who we are as Indigenous people: continuance, healing, and life..*

*Unraveling the Spreading Cloth of Time*

worn wheel turning rusted water  
he carried copper tubing, pressure  
slowly corroding the bones of  
his left shoulder, the vault of his heart bent  
for sixty-six years. I remember his handkerchief  
mopping sweat, his lunch made by  
folding bread in the dark dawn, the  
thermos of coffee, enough to last  
to Baltimore, Harrisburg, Frederick  
wiring factory buildings outside in  
winter, fingers burnt red with frost,  
colored scrap wire twisted on my  
child's wrist. I waited for his return  
every day, listening for his truck  
engine upon the asphalt, my photo  
hidden inside the worn wallet. before  
dawn he carried water to piglets and hens,  
.22 rifle against the bull's brow every January  
a sacrifice enough to feed a family until next year  
eyes straining in the faint pink of clouds  
like childhood mornings on a dairy farm  
metal tines piercing baled hay, the Indian  
boy unable to read who spent every living hour  
governed by the turning sun

each moment ticking toward this day  
when the mid-winter solstice struck  
stones tuned by ancient hands carved  
by deer antler chisels, winter snow  
blinding as invisible memories  
in a distant land where ancient monoliths listen  
for their cue to signal that the hour had come  
like the valves of his heart, waiting  
under a December horizon of stars  
living every day on faith.

did he struggle for air  
or lift up his aching head once  
more that winter day of slanted light  
death deep and vast as the butcher's  
soothing voice as he turns the latch  
not wanting adrenaline to ruin a lifetime  
worth of gentleness, for fear to become  
his last memory  
in the barn of hay alone, the bull  
long slain in his earthen stall, my father  
extinguished, their lives blessed forever  
by their blood flowing among the living  
resting upon the great oak boards of the

*Unraveling the Spreading Cloth of Time*

barn floor sawed by men's hands and  
passed through paper sand to smooth  
what had never meant to be rough  
his last day the shortest of the year.

his heart exploded between morning coffee  
and ten footprints in the snow, he tied  
his boots just the same that day,  
draw up snugly, right over left, pull through,  
tighten, make a bow, squared nails on cracked  
wide hands, red bird hopping in gray branches  
of the lilac. searching the bare patch he shoveled  
for sunflower seed. bitter cold between breaths.  
lungs prepared at conception for this moment  
to fall empty. destiny encoded his vessels, angels  
counted each breath. while the sacred devout  
at Stonehenge, Upper Peninsula, Peru chanted,  
danced all night at their end of the world  
party, waiting for the earth to crack and destroy  
but here in Pennsylvania is where the fates  
came to call. where the last pebble fell  
from the maker's hand and the mid-winter king  
disappeared into the garnet red sun.