

Cascadia Cento

If I were water, I'd catch in the cup of you,
a charm against entropy.

How to fight the insuperable pain of unbelonging
roosting (safely) below my caged window?

Reach, brace, resist, avoid, deflect, split, notch, rustle, shake,
bend, and shimmy.

The racket of sandhill cranes and the peep-whistles geese make—
waves of awakening air vibrated above the stillness of melting snow.

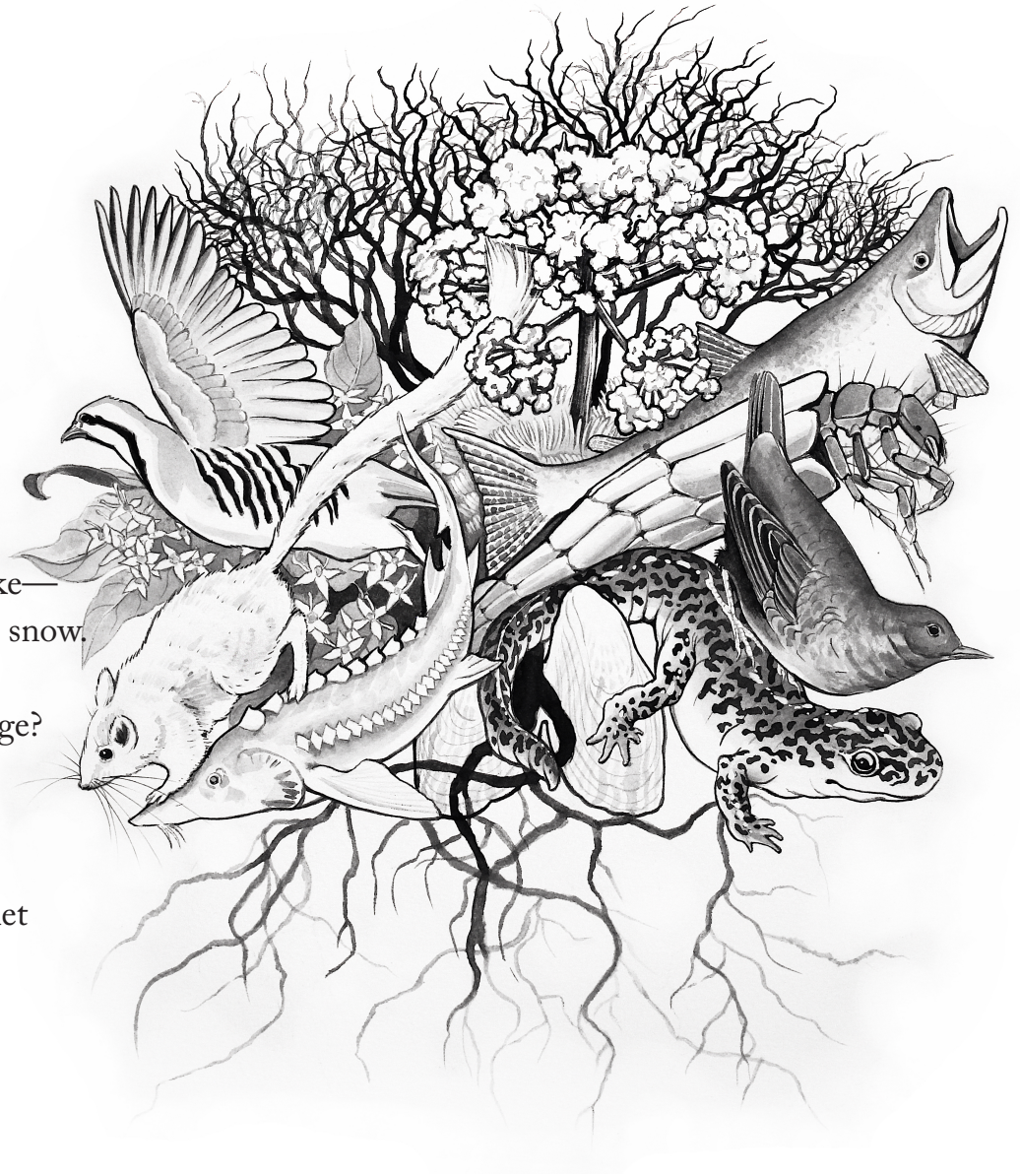
The animals and the plants. They care nothing for our likes.

Which of us is animal, compromising root systems as we forage?

Who could resist touching the moon, if it came down, in its
thousand little bodies?

Imagine a land breathing and rolling with blue
through the firedamp of grey air and the final smudge of scarlet
that was the sun.

Even now, I cannot detail each way I perceived you—
Wet-sticky-salty-gritty—alive.



A cento is a poetic form composed entirely of lines from existing poems. Here, the lines come from poems in each of the 14 communities of *Cascadia Field Guide: Art, Ecology, Poetry*. Only punctuation has changed. Art: Eastern Rivers Community, by Justin Gibbens. www.cascadiafieldguide.com