

# Helina Hookoomsing

## Danbwa

Our feet, our feet hit the earth  
like beating the skin of a drum  
Danbwa danbwa danbwa danbwa danbwa  
We evoke the wolf of the woods  
Our bare feet on damp soil,  
Each step becomes our ritual  
*Nou apel Mama Later*  
*Nou vant kriye, divan leve dan nou lesouf*  
*Ki'nn ariv nou danbwa?*  
*Ki'nn ariv nou pie, nou bwa, nou fler,*  
*nou plant, nou fei, nou lagrin,*  
*nou langaz, nou sante, nou lapriyer?*

We call Mother Earth, our bellies cry  
*Nou souffle lespri danbwa*  
*Ek li reponn.*  
*Nou anset sante, koze dan langaz danbwa,*  
They hum in our throats  
They dance in our blood and echo in our bones  
We only need to remember  
We ask them to return,  
*Retourne ek pran form ki nou bizin*  
*dan sa lemond-la, in this moment,*  
In this vision, in this

Sacred place

*Danbwa danbwa danbwa danbwa danbwa*

The wolf calls, a howling in the wind  
A long forgotten invitation to let our roots connect  
once more to Mama Earth and remember our wild  
nature, remember our dead, remember our lost  
selves in all this savagery, feel the hungry  
wilderness creeping like vines through our soles  
and into our veins returning us slowly to the soil,  
The weeds of human experience,  
The humbling truth that nature will eclipse us.

This ancient song, *vie kouman letan,*  
*Vibre dan sak brans, dan bwa, respire,*  
*dan leker, dan lesiel, dan premie plore*  
*kan nou ne, dan dernie larm*  
*kan nou les nou lekor vinn later*  
*Danbwa danbwa danbwa danbwa danbwa*

We plant seeds of wisdom so we may know  
the things you have made and taught us,  
The lessons you have hidden *danbwa,*  
The sacredness that still breathes  
in these desecrated lands, the hope that grows  
amongst the ugliness of all our broken genius,  
The pollution of our old unwanted wealth  
*Lespwar ki pouse, lespwar ki pirse,*  
The hope that pierces through

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the plastic and the metal and the glass  
and into the hearts of every man

who enters here, may they sharpen their ears  
to hear the voices *danbwa*,  
As old as stars and soft as the fading sun,  
We return to honour the elders,  
To weep for forgiveness and to heal our shame,  
Dig our hands into the dirt,  
We pray for wholeness and to heal Earth's pain,  
We walk in balance and harmony,  
To grow new life and see blessed change  
*Danbwa danbwa danbwa danbwa danbwa*

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Poem is punctuated as intended.