

## **The Forest of Forever**

**by Rebecca Zseder**

Wake up.

Visit the forest of your mind and run through trees like memories as far back as the number of years you've been alive.

Then stop.

Turn back around and run to the future.

Believe that there is no need for retrospection...in retrospect.

And tuck (his) story away with hers in a vain attempt to make your life your own.

Perhaps somewhere along the way between failure and the search for someone else to blame you'll wake up entirely

with a thirst for ignition and a thwarted ignorance.

Revisit the forest grown thick in your mind.

Follow the path backwards to when the trees were just as beautiful yet far more recognized, to the water that's heard from the river below, and the village which was founded on nowhere else to go.

Back to the time when your last name was first written.

Then to when it was first said.

Is this land your own or just a place to which you were lead?

Go back to the boats, visit the seas, find the land for the first time again.

Remember where you came from to know where you are going.

Each Marigold.

Each Thompson

Each Bradley.

Each Indigenous heart and home.

The minds of today's people may be closed tighter than their history books,  
but history has never closed itself off from its people.

The past welcomes the present and the present must search through the past to find the right  
future

No settlement is ever structured if the sediment is unsure.

Know what once was to know what now is.

Because history itself encompasses all of this.

History itself lasts is fated forever.

"Hail guest, we ask not what thou art.

If friend we greet thee hand and heart.

If stranger such no longer be.

If foe, our love shall conquer thee."