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Goat Rock Medicine

by

R. L. Boyer

In the shadow of Goat Rock, on the wave-swept
beach below, my Medicine Shield seems (almost)

complete: a spiral circle constructed on virgin sand
(smooth, without traces) in the form of a Mandala, a

cross within a circle of labyrinthine spiral patterns—
at the center, my horsehide drum, made by a shaman

of the Chepang tribe, covered with talismans:
black and white stones, four kernels of corn from

the garden of Red Earth Descendants: Indian Corn—
Yellow Corn, Red Corn, White and Black Corn

People of the sacred Medicine Wheel, emblems of
ancient Turtle Island prophecies, the End of Time—

and the short pale tube of mysterious magical power,
potent with *mana*, a charm for protection, gifted by

Mayan sorcerers to protect me in the potent darkness
of the sacred ancestral ceremonial grounds, as I

carried out their instructions after rituals end, where
I learned the sacred tongues of spirits and birds, where

I was attacked by demon dogs, possessed, my knee
fresh-bandaged where their teeth tore my skin, where

(I was told) the ghosts of Ancestors gathered behind
me to watch, where I used the power of my songs and

sacred ceremonial eagle feather, where I carried the
sacred bundle of the Mayans in ceremony for the first

time and received many visions from *Taita Wachuma*,
where I wore the amulet of my native Ancestors—
the smooth black stone made for skinning shields—
around my neck and carried the drumbeat for the

ceremonial camp, through the deep dark hours of night,
while shamans prayed nearby at their sacred *mesas*,

while Baby Sasquatch shrieked in the woods, also
nearby, on holy ground, where the sacred drum must

never cease beating through the long, long night,
where others assigned to relieve me fell asleep, and

cold and exhaustion (almost) overcame me in the
dark under the stars beside the campfire where

shamans sang, waking inhuman familiars whose
voices chirped and shrieked in the darkness under

starry heavens while others slept, where shamans of
the Maya, Mohawk and Blackfeet gathered, laid out

their sacred *mesas*, led ceremonies, passed down
since ancient times, sang songs of power in the steamy

fire-heated sweat lodge we built by the icy stream,
where the deep heartbeat of my drum ebbed and

flowed, like the beating of waves here at sundown—a
heartbeat rhythm, of ebb and flow—the eternal circle

of the Deep, of Mother Earth, Source of Life, her
voice the rhythmic thunder of waves, lapping the shore at

high tide, drawing near to the Shield and my sand-made
Mandala, the spiral Medicine Circle already fading, a
memory, erased (as I watch) by the surging Deep.