

# Twelve Algonquin Moons

Justin McGuirl

Buried in blankets of charcoal darkness,  
 a lit face rests.  
 Sunken, pale skinned.  
 Marked by  
 thirsty, barren seas.  
 Wolf moon.  
 Descending 300,000 miles below,  
 starved, worshippers of the night on  
 padded fours,  
 pray to the great frigid light,  
 ignited by rejuvenation of  
 the mighty planet's orbit.  
 Snow moon.  
 Abandoned paw prints  
 of the devotees  
 vanish.  
 The mighty Algonquin families  
 seek refuge  
 from a frozen plague in  
 roasting, smoke-clogged wigwams.  
 Worm moon.  
 Iced crystals thaw,  
 then fade  
 and dismantle.  
 Wriggling creatures,  
 knighted by the great wood  
 shift and sift  
 dense, oxygen-hungry soil.  
 Pink moon.  
 Beneath the squirming toes and  
 moist, ripe earth between,  
 infant stems  
 jet up towards the  
 illuminated orb.  
 Flower moon.  
 Immature roots enter  
 adolescence and finally bloom into  
 maturity with  
 warm-colored buds  
 Strawberry moon.  
 Burning, thick vapor  
 diffuses across long rows of  
 cultivated soil and young  
 native children gallop

to the crimson, juicy  
 fruits.  
 Buck moon.  
 Cloaked behind the green  
 deciduous camouflage,  
 a lone deer  
 spies on the crowd while  
 stabs of pain emerge in  
 bearded, ivory racks atop its  
 wise crown.  
 Sturgeon moon.  
 Birchbark kenus slither, causing  
 wrinkles in stagnant water.  
 Sun-dried natives cast far-stretching  
 knit nets into  
 the mansion of aqua life.  
 Harvest moon.  
 Foreigners of the old world labor  
 late into the climax of the  
 total face's trek above.  
 The snow-skinned laborers  
 shuck and hack  
 the Algonquin three sisters  
 in chilled fields.  
 Hunter's moon.  
 Arrows pierce dull air  
 And whisk into the side  
 of a fox.  
 Strong warriors praise  
 their gods with thanks  
 for a new gift.  
 Beaver moon.  
 Frost creeps into the atmosphere.  
 Nature's dam builder observes  
 the cold,  
 gathers bark for the coming  
 winter.  
 Cold moon.  
 The great light of the night rules  
 darkness.  
 Dutiful, sundown submits to  
 Night king's lengthening lifetime.  
 Behold -  
 the moon.



"Nightfall" by Hannah Summer