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CONSAATION CHOKES & CHA  
 AND FEELING THE YOUNG

## American Oystercatcher 2

I walk to the banks of Christmas Bay  
And launch my kayak for a long slow ride  
To the future,  
To a place where life and all livings things  
Are special, are revered, are sanctified,  
A place where we live by principles  
That give all life a chance to survive,  
A chance to realize the potential  
That emerged from the Big Bang  
(Or the creation if you prefer),  
An event that brought forth you and me  
And all forms of life on this living planet.

I come back to the bay, to the moment,  
And realize I have been talking  
Aloud to an oyster reef  
About this imagined, spiritual future,  
About this potential of my species  
That could result from changes  
Currently underway but yet to come,  
And in this moment of realization,  
I see that an oystercatcher has been listening  
From his place amidst the living shells,  
Lifting his neon orange beak  
As a sign of recognition,  
Giving me a knowing nod  
Of his chocolate brown head,  
Winking his golden eye and  
Whispering to me "Yeah Buddy".

## American Oystercatcher

The water is asleep.  
The tide has not yet begun  
To move through the pass  
To fill the bay.

The birds loll complacently  
On low exposed sand flats,  
Waiting, ever waiting,  
As am I in my kayak,  
Watching for the movement,  
Waiting for the moment.

The reef is above the water surface,  
The oysters grey-black and shiny,  
A squirt of liquid flying skyward,  
Proof of life within the shells.

A pair of oystercatchers sit together,  
Orange beaks like neon lights  
In the dying afternoon sunlight,  
Waiting, patiently waiting,  
For the tide that will open  
The shell that holds the meal.  
And then it happens.  
An alarm has rung that I  
Cannot hear.

Two snowy egrets glide before me,  
Extending black legs with yellow boots  
To claim their fishing spot on the shells.  
A great egret joins the reef fishers,  
Followed by two fussing willets,  
All coming to fish in pools  
Within the oyster lattice,  
Pools slowly, ever so slowly,  
Being filled.

Well after they do, I perceive it,  
The changing water line,  
The motion of the tidal current  
That the birds perceived  
In ways beyond me.