



***In response to Kristen Hendricks***

*Arctic Burning*

***They Rise Up***

How shall we contain our grief and fear as they rise up? No, not the prehistoric creatures become ghosts when the meteor fell. We remember the ghosts of the mammoths, oviraptors, and velociraptors. We make them into toys and movies but when their bones rise from the burning arctic tundra, they bring other horrors so not so easily tamed.

Pandemics! The revenge of the natural world on overrunning the Earth's carrying capacity. Too many humans. The virus comes silently, stealthily but mindlessly. All this time waiting beneath the frosty Earth crust high up near the poles. Waiting, waiting.

This last time they say bats, eating bats from the wet markets in China. Described as a new virus but I wonder how old is a virus waiting in the tundra? Older than the mammoths? How did it get captured, hidden away from humans until now? Did the deaths of the mammoths and dinosaurs carry the virus away with them?

This new virus strikes down the most vulnerable humans. A mistake perhaps because it leaves those humans who can survive and carry on in their unwillingness to honor the Earth, but those ancient viruses rising in the burning Arctic will bring death and more death and we grieve, we weep, we cannot hold our loved ones.

**Patricia A. Murphy**  
Roaming Writers



*Kristen Hendricks, Arctic Burning*, beeswax, damar resin, oil pigment stick, wood ash, shellac, on cradled birch panel, 12 x 18 inches