

# LUNAR TIDES



SHANNON WEBB-CAMPBELL



FIRST EDITION

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*For my moonshadow, my mother,  
Diane (née Beattie) Campbell  
(1959–2019)*

*Remember the moon, know who she is. Remember the sun's  
birth at dawn, that is the strongest point of time. Remember  
sundown and that giving away to night. Remember your birth;  
how your mother struggled to give you form and breath.  
You are evidence of her life, and her mother's, and hers.  
Remember your father. He's your life, also.*

—Joy Harjo

*What phase was the moon when she left?*

*How high or low were the tides?*

Spring tide: Sun and Moon at opposite sides ( $180^\circ$ )

Neap tide: Sun and Moon at  $270^\circ$

Spring tide: Sun and Moon at the same side (cycle restarts)



*NEW MOON*

## TIME: A BIOGRAPHY

*A poet is Atlantic and lion in one. While one drowns us the other gnaws us. If we survive the teeth, we succumb to the waves.*

—Virginia Woolf

### I: Beginning

A baby is born in a room to a body. Hears her mother's voice. The baby wants to return to womb waters. What is this room? What is this body? Living is a stretch. Doctors assign sex. Only hours until you hear tides. Nothing prepares you for life. Born three months premature. Are the grandmothers in my body? Doctors don't like to answer these questions. Life becomes a quest of origin. Mother reminds us why light thins. Passing into night, you return somewhere like wind.

A room. Body. Baby.