

Selected poems from *Wolfcraft* by Narya Deckard, April 2023

Women Who Know Something More Π

“I beg you to believe it. Women that know something more do exist, night-women do exist, and what is up, they can make down.” –Petronius Satyricon

By the wisdom of the rune ur!
By the screech owl’s flight in the night!
We are women who know something more.

They slander us with shibboleths that drown our lore.
Our deaths they scribe with fear. They indict
The wisdom we gather from the rune ur.

They say locks can’t hinder us: through the door’s
Hinge we slip, your snatched children our appetite,
For they dread women who know something more.

But my potions of nettle, crabapple, and mugwort
Do not demand your child’s blood, nor do I need midnight
Pacts with the devil to find strength from the wise rune ur,

Rather the metaphor I cast to wolves, chamomile, and sycamores
I beseech; for love, not power, is my acolyte:
As I commune, I know something more.

What we will from without, we implore
From within. Urðr, Norn of our earth, delights
In our wisdom from the rune ur.
She blesses women who know something more.

Loris

Once, even the sun could not tell
Where I began and where I ended,
For it rose like a slow loris
With two limp tongues
That cannot find the flower's deep nectar.
I haven't seen the moon
In days, her waning crescent
A dark hole. I've lost
The time and my feet wander
As I follow faint tracks:
Bird, squirrel, deer, cat.
Though the sun rises late,
It cannot account for my own
Late hour of rising—
Sucked dry, worm-eaten ear of corn,
The husk hiding the shape of my being, hiding me
Empty. We finally fell into bed, humming our own songs
That merged into some sort of unity.

The Dog Who Writes Poems

Her long limbs tremble—
they confess coiled muscles.

My pen scrawls
as I reach for details.

Her eyes collect
each twitch of wing,

each twist of foot,
each feather ruffled

in the wind.
I doubt myself, scratch

out my words.
She continues to sign.

Not once has she erased
herself.

The Book of Unfixed Stars

Untangle your mane and tail with my fingers.
Pluck out the barbed burrs of autumn,
Dried seeds like Spiny Star Astrea snails,
Gathered in your hair from the miles of forest trails
We'd navigated that day. Pick out stones

In your hooves wedged from the rivers
We followed only for a time but then would chart
Our own way while the river rushed onward
To join with other, distant waters.
Curry your thickening coat until its black shines

The brightness of snow in a clear night sky.
Stuff your feeder with alfalfa and timothy.
Fill your bucket with icy water that shimmers
A thin edge between this world
Where I have found myself in relation to you,

And the springs of another. Knowing,
But unable to endure, drowning
In knowing that this would be one of our last,
That soon we will be lost,
I linger before you to say goodnight

And brace my feet as you rub your forehead
Against my chest, as you press me with your white star
That glows like a creature's unwavering eye
In the night, white brilliance
In your sea of black,

And for a moment
Pegasus,

No longer fixed stars,
Reaches down
And grazes me with his wings.