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Autobiography

Once upon a time
I was a shell,
a crustacean,
a cicada's
exoskeleton
left behind on a blade
of dead grass.
A shedding,
translucent snakeskin
sloughed off by the thorns
of a bougainvillea.
Even my eyes shed,
little plastic glasses
left behind
as if to say –
yes, I once existed,
this was me,
you can keep me in your pocket,
or pressed between the pages
of your journal, if you please.

But where, who, & what
I am now,
belongs only to me.

Trials

At nine, I was bewitched by
Samantha,
Sabrina,
& the ladies
of The Craft.
In my tree house
I made a nest of
rhinestones,
clovers,
& lizard eggs.
Baby anoles bit my
lobes & I wore the reptilians
like earrings
as I would chant.

Sometimes
I still talk
to the moon goddess
at night, when
the locusts of loneliness
swarm.
Once upon a lunar eclipse,
hanging ripe
in the sky, amidst
an ochereous glow,
she whispered to me
our herstory.

Medieval midwives
used the blushing Belladonna's
asterisked lips,
Ergot's golden brushes,
& dishes of digitalis,

to ease Eve's curse.
But the Church said
mothers should suffer
& doctors desired
the birthing business.

They called them
witches. Wrists
tethered together
at the stake,
breasts illuminated
like Luna Moths
rising
from the smoke & from

their ashes
grew a gnarled
mahogany tree
with a womyn's
face, owls nested
in her mouth.

I could see it
from my window,
she sang
to me
as I plucked her plump
mangoes,
their coral
phosphorescence caressing
my cheeks.

Necromantic

Glossary for the Practitioner

aperture: a pinprick or a portal.

apparition: the latent image of a photograph.

bereavement: a heart incarcerated in the tundra's permafrost.

black magick: do unto others as you wish.

candles: flame-kissed intentions drift into the ether & cocoon themselves with wax.

crystals: fossilized vibration.

deity: feather of the dandelion.

divination: the rivers in your palms. the winking faces in a deck of cards. the smack of a sparrow against your window.

earth: Hail to the Guardian of the Watchtower of the North, who paints the sky underneath the trees with lightning bolts deviating deep to retract the rain from the Earth.

eclipse: to hide in plain-sight.

faerie: a cauldron of anarchy, snippets of rainbows & secrets.

fire: Hail to the Guardian of the Watchtower of the South, who ignites the Slash Pine that scatters its seeds with fire.

geomancy: Puella, Via, Populous, & Puer. the beauty that exists in dirt.

ghost: the blood of a hymen on wedding sheets.

haunt: a man who keeps these sheets in a suitcase, away from your light and kerosene.

hex: a shadow stitched.

hydromancy: cast a pebble in the pond, see if the ripples mimic your palm's.

incense: pulses of perfume for dead friends.

invocation: He sucked the stars out of her eyes,
and chewed them
one
by
one
by one
devouring the brightest
casting the dim aside
until her eyes were sockets
and he held
all
of
her light.

Itzapapalotle: the skeleton with obsidian wings
who picks
black butterflies from her purse
and slips
them in an envelope
sealed
with
a
kiss.

jinx: you owe me a soda.

kiss: intentional presses of essence between sisters before & after rituals.

knot: the steps on a witch's ladder. a rosary bead.

knock: black butterflies
nestle on a maple door
the address is yours

lock: of hair, in a bow, in a pouch, sealed with wax.

magic city: where pet shops sell votive candles with their goats.

message: the midnight rooster's crow, the moth on your pillow.

moon bath: the oyster in the sky radiates, as do you nude, laying on the roof. a goblet of milk, a goblet of wine drips from locks and pools in her navel.

necromancy: To speak to them
you do not need
a Ouija board
or electromagnetic
specter detectors,
you need
a crystal glass
of champagne
&
their favorite record.
In fact,
do not speak,
just listen
to them
sing.

necromantic: Little hearts foxtrot across the cemetery.
I'll spin you a purse with silk & spiderwebs,
collect fireflies & glow worms
seal them in mason jars with a kiss
& place these presents
where the dirt meets your headstone.

nganga: If you find one
smash it,
watch the ashes rise to form
the shape
of a birthday cake
with cursive icing
on the face that
reads,
I
am
free.

numerology: 52 cards, 52 weeks. 4 suits, 4 seasons. 13 in a suit, 13 cycles of the moon.

offering: She opened her chest and he plucked the gems out of her heart. She loved him, so she gave him her favorite. A platinum sphere, but when she held up to the light and rolled it in her palm, there were wisps of blue, violet, pink, and yellow. He came back to her the next day, told her he lost it, it fell out of his pocket, but really he pawned it. He asked if he could have one more. She was crushed, but she loved him, so she let him pluck one more. This gem was made from crystalized music. Do I really need to tell you? He pawned that one too.

omen: cuckoo on the clock falls off
drape mirror with cloth

pyromancy: cast sea salt into the flame, a specter will whisper your next lover's name.

quill: peacock's feather or albatross, eye of Horus or upside-down cross.

rad queer witchy commune: sexy creepy witch
sex coven adds some oomph to
house reputation

ritual: what you can't blow away you can bury. open her skull & scoop the remnants with lavender anointed palms, bury it & smooth the surface of the turf and paint your lips with the dust. a specter will seep from the soil, slither to your feet & rise like a cobra if you're charming, to tell you what to be when you grow up.

séance: (area code) for ghosts

sister: pin-pricked finger tips, paint each others lips sanguine, lick, kiss, spit.

skull: fill with rainbow gumballs,
seal the cracks with white wax.

spirit deacon: a head lolls on smooth stone. lips agape, sockets scraped. orifices spill phosphorescence on the cemetery lawn. lantern of unholy light.

star anise: The taste of black
licorice offends
children & the dead,
like a sliver of glass
in an eye.

uncross: to unstitch a shadow.

vortex vein: the spider's web inside an eye.

water: Hail to the Guardian of the Watchtower of the West who gives the lilies a place to rest who signifies the crack of birth with water.

wind: Hail to the Guardian of the Watchtower of the East, who levitates the dandelion's feathers and whisks them into the spirals on Van Gough's canvas suspended in the wind.

x(3) : as done unto you, done unto me, x3, x3, x3, xxx, xo, xo, I loved you so.

yellow: the color of air, the killer of parasites, Jupiter's light.

yolk: oomancy, oomantia, ooscopia, slither into a bell or boat.

zodiac: the tapestries in the sky.

44 Ways to Measure You and Me

1. January 28, 2013. 2. Our first kiss. 3. After mouthfuls of carrot cake. 4. 37 minutes and 23 seconds of Le Tigre. 5. Your hand in my panties before an AA meeting. 6. By full moons 7. Quarter moons 8. And half moons 9. Spent slow dancing on gravel next to ocean waves. 10. Monday nights at open mic, I read before you sang. 11. February 14, 2013. 12. Pink cupcakes in a park 13. A blue glitter box filled with an artistic rendition of your heart. 14. By beads of sweat. 15. Entangled ligaments. 16. Slick secretions mixed with exasperated exhales of *I love you's*. 17. I said yes, my head on your chest. 18. In poems I wrote you. 19. In songs you wrote me. 20. In secrets of cc's, syringes, and plastic baggies. 21. Hepatitis writhing 22. You said I would never find you, but I always did. 23. In parks. 24. On street corners. 25. In a cemetery. 26. The percentage of DNA in teardrops. 27. The percentage of heroin in your veins. 28. The percentage of cell phone battery left after suicide threats. 29. Followed by records, rings, and guitar strings. 30. The times we talked about getting married on Halloween. 31. We would name our daughter Wednesday. 32. Own a record company. 33. The songs we never recorded together. 34. The shows you never saw me play. 35. The amount of times you said *Wednesday is dead*. 36. September 13, 2013. 37. The diagnosis 38. Cancer dances in your pancreas and liver. 39. She shares herself with your organs and makes your body a bordello. 40. Scar tissue. 41. Coffins. 42. The year you have left alive. 43. The sorrow, the guilt. 44. When I leave before you die.

The Moon



Hope

Somewhere among the knees
of cypress trees, little gnomes
unfold, ghost orchids bloom.