



SPELLS,  
A CEREMONY ABOVE

ARIELLE GUY

# Spells, a ceremony above

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*SPELLS*

. . . . .

*“He will be here soon, with bones and ox carts.”*

. . . . .

A ceremony above birds,  
drowned corset, Ophelia, open the door.

Water,  
transparent, made smooth by  
body and language,  
nettle Soul-acorn  
kindle bruises for Month.

Deer hover in the closings,  
run forests with rain,  
herons perch  
in the tops of trees, misplaced,  
feathering ashes.  
Long ago, fire burned at the bottom of the lake,

beginning low, missing you,  
trying to hold onto the light,  
try to hold onto the light.

*AUGUST*

. . . . .

*Songs of the Wintersummer*

August 22 unfurls like the twenty-two sails  
of a light brigade,  
saltweather.

Crew diaries flat on mess tables.  
Trolling the sea,  
way past Russia's old capitol, Sitka,

to find Gotham or Moby.  
Salt sticks in the mouth,  
makes it hard to sleep

without dreaming of steak.  
Missing the wife.  
Smoking on deck

you think of kissing me  
taste my mouth  
all night.

Dream of our kitchen  
and what we'll cook.  
My coconut and amber skin,

our bedroom's red velvet curtains,  
another time. All you do  
is pick up the phone

and call me. Within seconds,  
you are back in our bed.  
Our bed

and now you'll be sleeping  
next to me for years,  
for years.

*The green, the green, the green*

In the shadows, the porch  
squeaks shut.

Once a match is lit or wet, it's useless.

The windows shut and shut, open and open. The terrifying reality of stillness.

*SEPTEMBER*

*Reappearances*

The smoke from the blown-out  
wick disperses into the air. The half-and-half from when you visited is still in my refrigerator.

Imagine using the whole word, “refrigerator,” instead of fridge.  
Marshmallows, vitamins, amino acids,  
T shirts, milk, late-night TV.

My tuning fork disappears into the ether. I am channeling  
with my candles and my ghosts.  
Sign here, and here, and here.

It is too damn bright in here.  
Way too much sun in the bedroom.  
Three or 4 o’clock, it gets nasty and blinding.

Turn on the radio,  
open the curtains with the dragonflies  
etched in white on a now you see it, now you don’t background.

You think you hear things, you think you are smart. Your life is tightly wound  
around strong, delicately tied beliefs. To untie them would unravel years of work.  
Better to make a rug and curtains and bedspreads and tablecloths and towels and pillows

and bows and tassles. Make coffee when the sun gets bright so you have two hot things  
in your bedroom. The time is night, scissors lay quietly in their kitchen drawer,  
and anyway, you’re in the bedroom.

Think of what to cut out next. Keep sewing,  
cut the thread and cloth with your eyes.  
Those eyes, those eyes, those eyes.

Those eyes, those eyes, those eyes  
move bright and sweet around the room. Melt heart and nerves in their glare.  
The Radio sleeps, is imaginary and real, coal flustered into fire.

Keep sewing, soon the radio silence will be over and borders  
breached. Never mind that the whale is a mammal and I thought it was a fish.  
You will be here soon, with bones and oxcarts.

*OCTOBER: PREMONITION*

*Snow*

I dream of ice and water  
I dream of you in the end  
unreachable horizon  
in your sleeping body

stark trees and winter's hold  
on ash ground  
these are my trees  
sky shrouded with white mist

this is the way it is  
I've always been told  
never believed it  
in the end magic is unknown

the broken heart cracking open  
ribs making room  
for red-orange fire  
curling together in warm blindness

*SEPTEMBER: OCTOBER*

. . . . .

*The Natural World*

*for C*

As we walked into the heart of the air,  
winds parted and made room for aspen –  
the depth of which, hovering,  
made small, gasping sounds.

Whatever it was found between  
our palms, two and two,  
lay there, like a shocked beetle,  
memorizing cardinals.

Red of the wings, of the crown,  
centered on a thin, pale beetle,  
wings beating, beating,  
the closest breed between species

as bird and insect can get.  
This is how I first saw you:  
a triangulation of fixed points,  
ciphered and soft-spoken

beating your wings endlessly  
against a powerful machinery  
of dust, autumn, and preternatural  
society. These false humilities  
stretched before us like undulations  
of the ocean itself, its power  
concealed in our intertwined hands  
and bodies, leveraging balanced

futures in oil, gas and heavy machinery.  
Premonitions not enough to coax  
the lion out of the womb,  
terrible fire-breasted flowerpeckers

eating out of our hands, bruised  
from the heat. The sun returned  
to the point in the sky where  
it illuminates everything.

From the topmost level of the arcade,  
music boxes played old songs  
in their sleep, and the buildings turned  
patina to match the Old War.

Skylines fall and rise in this ether,  
shallow-bent and rusting,  
not a full curve of the atom  
around fingers and church tips.

Both reach into the evening sky,  
full and convex,  
as floodgates open what was  
once thought forever closed.

Around these opening promenades,  
water curves and polishes.  
The full moon, rising all day,  
now at night, burns the sky.

Arielle Guy is a poet and graphic novelist, whose works include the chapbook *Gothenburg*, published by ypolita press (2007), and the self-published graphic novel, *Maia Sierra's Blood Journals*. Her poetry has appeared in *EOAGH*, *small town*, *Cannot Exist*, *6x6*, *CARVE*, and *kadar koli*, and others, and she is the editor of the online arts magazine, *Turntable & Blue Light* ([turntablebluelight.com](http://turntablebluelight.com)). Her first full-length book, *Three Geogaophies: A Milkmaid's Grimoire*, will be out from Dusie Press in May 2009.