2002

Clairvoyant's Reading

Carolyne Wright

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation

Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.5610
CAROLYNE WRIGHT

*Clairvoyant’s Reading*

Unlock the Sphinx, she tells me, there’s a yellow scent for miles. Roman sculptures cluster on the hills. The Archer draws his crossbow over the observatory dome. At the field’s edge, an Arab pony paws the mustard flowers. Pyramids glisten in blood-begotten light.

Mustard flowers at the field’s edge, centaur over the observatory dome. Sandalpaste and turmeric, she tells me, from the sacrifice of fire. Pyramids glisten in blood-begotten light where the Archer draws his crossbow. And the woman you once were poises at the casement, listening

for the Arab pony’s neigh, a message from the sacrifice of fire. Where are the sculptures that crowned the Palatine? The Bronze Age guides who walked among us with their javelins, their granite, anachronistic lions? Their yellow scent clings, their blood-begotten mustard flowers glisten.

Listen: the woman you once were hands you keys to unfamiliar doors. The guide to the Bronze Age leads you to the waterline mirrored in hemlocks’ downward shadows, where the Centaur
and the Arab pony graze. Sandalpaste and turmeric—runes on the observatory dome, foretellings from the sacrifice of fire.

Stone lions on the steps, the Alexandrian Library burns to the waterline, weathervanes stop spinning. The woman poises at the casement, hands you her keys and parasol. A mustard sun sets over the Adriatic. Have you been reading Plutarch’s Lives? The Bronze Age hemlocks wrap you in their shadows. What is behind you is forgiven. Now go, unlock the Sphinx.