

Youth

WORDS OF MY ANCESTORS' WISDOM

text and images by Carly Pruett

I have been reading tarot for the past six years and I have really loved reading tarot and have felt very connected with the cards. But this Fall I took a one night rune workshop.

I had never used runes before that point, but as the class went on I felt a very deep, age-old connection with the runes, even stronger than the connection I have with tarot. I felt a profound need to pursue this. I have viking ancestry, so the runes are in my blood.

I have a very strong relationship with my ancestors and I honor and worship them at a local cemetery deep in the forest near my house.



Recently some trees were being cleared at the cemetery including several very old cedar trees.

I left my offerings and salvaged a branch and took it home. I dried it by the fire and cut it into 3/4-inch rounds then peeled them and sanded them and painted them in a snowy winter storm while the power was out, just as my ancestors would have done.

Because of the deep wisdom of the powerful tree from the cemetery, the runes speak words of my ancestors' wisdom.

Youth

Comparison

Simplified to an out of place hair
Like wry bread she smiles
Eyebrows set to disconcert
Teeth sing, jaws grind
Majestic objective
Carefree worry
Defend my madame
From adolescent hair pins,
Light that rams in all the wrong places
Brown eyes are not similar
Brown hair is not related
Brown skin,
She has white.
But when the clock strikes three
Mice crawl out
Tongues loll in
Shoulders back now
To hide the misery of wealth
Comparison, if you will
These two fine ladies on a stormy
day
Forget not, the turquoise necklace
That covers skin of metal
Lips of crimson, chin of corners
Blue against brown
White against white
Who's to say which is to be
More aesthetically pleasing
When all I see is slave
And owner
Love and hate
Compassion and remorse
A whip shatters bones like glass

A scream claws at ears, digging in
Like a wound that will remain
Bleeding, open
Termites gnaw for wood
And this is what happens when brown lies still on the dirt
She fades.
Tilted face shows no misery,
Cornered eyes search,
In the distance, they wait
For a photographer to take a shot
So for one second they can pretend
Nothing is real.
But we all wake up sometime,
With the flash, eyes open
I did what I could.

by Maya Litauer



Artwork by Monieka • Photo by RQ.

Youth

Your knees ripped out from under you,
Shaking convulsing trembling crumbling,
Your breath heaves barely tearing through,
Your collapsed closed choking lungs.
Sifting waters turning the rolling tides,
Of seventy-five percent of you,
Pouring down, crushing drowning in large sighs,
A harsh cleansing of the undeserving slums.
Beaten, broken and battered you lie,
A dark chasm of your heart cracked,
Now leaking the poison kept secret inside,
Seeping into the rest of you from toes to gums.
"How could I let it escape?!" you scream,
Too late the greed has infected and begun to kill,
You wonder, is this the American dream?
As you lay quietly after the quake.

— by Hilary



Photo by Amy Breeds

Youth

Doctor Help Me Sleep...

by Natalie Mogg

He says Doctor help me sleep, because when I close my eyes, all I can see is the wallpaper. My breath won't look me in the eye and my tongue is bone-dry dead against my gritty teeth.

He is hoping for something closer to the horse tranquilizer end of things than she is likely to prescribe (judging by the soft weather-worn fabric look around her brown eyes and the smell of sand dollars clinging to her office).

The doctor steeples her fingers with the kind of fatalism someone else might use to build a house. She is the perpetual stranger. People are mere scenery, props for positioning around the stage of her mind. She draws in everything she sees, pastes it on the insides of her eyelids, makes it a part of herself.



Witchwear by Athena Knowles. Photo by RQ.

Most people, when they meet her, begin to believe in magic. She has harbored a tooth for the forbidden since her first day (it still attracts her tongue to it like an open sore). A shrine to warm sweet darkness, an altar that she cradles always in her mouth- It's the only thing keeping her here. In the morning, she turns the key in the door and says, "This is freedom."

Most people, when they meet her, begin to lose faith in words. She pulls out a pad of paper and writes: Just like swimming will help you to breathe, music will teach you silence.

Go wash yourself in the rushing Nile

(Forget that you are sick)

go cleanse yourself in the muddy Nile.

(or even better, rejoice in your decaying limbs)

You are not ill
only dying
so make your wanting
an act of becoming
Swim.

Satisfied with her hand-scrawled message, she leaves.

The patient takes the slip of paper, thin and yellow, crinkling to the sound of autumn, and steps outside.

The Nile is pouring down from the sky.

The paper dissolves.

He supines his eyes and lays down on the unclean sidewalk and fills his bone-cavities with the contagious rushing and catches hypothermia and sleeps.