

The Otter Woman in the Star-studded Night

by Siobhán Houston

Dryad, she rises from the river
Water sluicing from her hair and limbs,
She calls to the forest denizens,
The raven, the starling, the wolf, the bear,
Her soft bark echoing off the stands of alder.

Her narrow feet make sucking sounds
As she moves along the miry bank,
Breasts mirroring a luminous star band,
Her belly radiating power,
She glows in the shadow as phosphorescence,
Her way lighted as she steps.

Gazing at me with fathomless eyes,
Full of wise shamanic journeys,
Of ancient gris-gris,
Of fireside incantations,
This woman with whom I will tryst for long,
Who nuzzles against me in the charcoal dawn,
Who tells me to breathe as her hand slips inside me,
Who covers my mouth with her own
To receive my kiss.

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