

Bon Courage

Why are the woods so alluring? A forest appears to a young girl one morning as she combs the dreams out of her hair. The trees rustle and whisper, shimmer and hiss. The forest opens and closes, a door loose on its hinges, banging in the strong wind. Everything in the dim kitchen: the basin, the jug, the skillet, the churn snickers scornfully. In this way a maiden is driven towards the dangers of a forest, but the forest is our subject, not this young girl.

She's glad to lie down with trees towering all around. A certain euphoria sets in. She feels molecular, bedeviled, senses someone gently pulling her hair, tingles with kisses she won't receive for years. Three felled trees, a sort of chorus, narrate her thoughts, or rather channel theirs through her, or rather subject her to their peculiar verbal restlessness...*our deepening need for non-being* intones the largest and most decayed tree, mid-sentence. *I'm not one of you*, squeaks the shattered sapling.

blackened by lightning. Their words become metallic, spangles shivering the air. *Will I forget the way home?* the third blurts. *Why do I feel like I am hiding in a giant's nostril?* the oldest prone pine wants to know. *Are we being freed from matter?* the sapling asks. *Insects are well-intentioned*, offers the third tree, by way of consolation. *Will it grow impossible to think a thought through to its end?* gasps the sapling, adding in a panicky voice, *I'm becoming spongy!* The girl feels her hands attach to some distant body. She rises to leave, relieved these trees are not talking about her.

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