

DEATH-WISHES, LIARS, AND A WITCH'S COIL³

SABRINA SCOTT

EDITORIAL ABSTRACT

Sabrina Scott's illustration and cogent insight into Kristeva's *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (1982) and the abject as a theme contains a tornado-like force of expression, tinkering between art and theory as the mind settles in states of demise. The work is reminiscent of how the artist (and the witch by extension) comes to terms with what Alejandra Pizarnik (2010) calls the *poetic body*, or the dream of death. That is, both the self and human becoming take shape between the bleeding shades and luminous lines of India ink in her illustration. The convex of being and non-being which emerges as subjectivity underlies the central struggle of what the abject is (flourishing in that brittle moment of hope as possibility strikes in a cascading brush line).

³ The titling of the cover illustrations was a collaborative effort between the Vol. 17 PlatForum Editorial Team and the artist.

CURITORIAL STATEMENT

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“Death Wishes, Liars, and a Witch’s Coil” reflects the often-forgotten reality of our existence, that life feeds on life, and that life and death are intimately connected. The death of plants and animals are required for our nourishment, and for life to continue. We manage to avoid this truth in the modern world, as we rarely have to hunt or harvest for our survival. We are cut off from the world, our environment is sanitised. The female figures in this piece are appropriate, as all things related to “Feminine” in the broadest sense are what make us uncomfortable in our rational, mechanistic society: the irrational, the emotional, the dirtiness of the earth itself. The Earth Mother becomes associated with the buried dead that lay underneath our feet. Jungian psychology would refer to this as the archetypal Shadow, that part of our psyche that makes us feel shame and revulsion. We would rather fill our lives with distractions than deal with the uncomfortable truth, and indeed, as Eliade has said, “Myth today chiefly takes the form of distractions” (Eliade 1958: 5). But the price of distraction is alienation from our own truth, and a sense of separation from life.

In the darkness, the realm of the Earth Mother, where blood, bones, and plant life mingle, there is a numinous wonder that comes from contemplating the horror of our existence. Sabrina Scott demonstrates how beautiful this darkness and pain of existence can be for those who choose to accept it. Her female figures gaze downward, and there is a pained look on one face, conveying the sorrow of the rejected Earth. Our lives are bound with the life of the Earth; reconnecting to Her is the path to healing our broken societies and the planet.

⁴ Dr. Brigid Burke teaches at Montclair State University. She is also the host of the Chthonia podcast, and the proprietor of Chthonia.net. Her articles, fiction, and poetry deal with the darker aspects of human behavior and the esoteric world. Brigid is an editor at Metapsychosis. Recently, she published a book, *Death and the Maiden: The Curious Relationship Between the Fear of the Feminine and the Fear of Death* (2019), with Algora Publishing.

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