

Forest Sketch

THE SUN NEW AWAKENED in mountain saddle —
I chase her from high desert to higher grove.
Among the juniper life is constant —
Unchanging acres of green-speckled yellow
Where cholla thrive in destruction and die in stagnancy.
Then the forest wraps around in comfort.
Piñons beckon the old arboreal monuments of the West
But their needles fall short of the sun.
Still above the chalky soil gives way
To rich, watery duff and

Aspen.

A glorious tree, the white tree of nobility,
The chartreuse of loyal steadfastness,
The gold of ripe affection —
In autumn hue, paramour of the sun,
In winter bare, the kin of the moon.
Her groves the chapel of the wild
Her branches the pews
Her leaves the scripture
Her birds the choir
Her kin the angels
Her father the Lord.
But even the clarion of the present
Gives way to the past.

The oak —
The faded gray of kings,
The amber of past promises kept.
Atop the mountain fortress of the sun
Oaks are the battlements —
Grays are the mighty towers
And gambels the heraldic shield
In reddish courage and brazen strength.
And upon her highest battlements
Resides the warrior sun.

From cactus of arboreal pretense
Through piñon stalks in dust
To aspen trophies of gold
And oaken pillars of strength —
That is the mountain castle of the King,
Golden Ruler of day seated on his throne.

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Set in *Berling Antiqua* with *Scribus 1.3.1*

Beach Sketch

PLAYFUL THE WAVES of sea and sky converge
Against luxuriant alluvions of sand
Soaked in heat and sea and brine.
Stalks of wild grass teem the upper dunes
Sighing in the listless seaborne breeze.
Benignant mounds of cloudy billow
Encroach the rising mariner sun
Returned from its Atlantic sojourn.
Waves grow in fury and ebb in passive aggression.
Great arms of sand sweep up the grassy dunes
Gathering the coastal sands in wait
Of the elusive storm.
And in the passing of a cloud
The sea relaxes to sublime serenity.

Apricot/Thorn

THE PLAINTIVE REED chanted on. I met his soulful
prayer halfway as I fingered the thorns. In my
prison they were the only plant that grew. As green
leaf withered, I wound the dying thorn into a knot -
a serpentine spiral, artificial in creation, organic in
shape. As I crafted it, sanguine paint wandered
from hand to know. I drew tight the final loop.

And it moved.

Within barren helix, so slight it eluded recognition,
a green shoot went out. Charmed by chanting reed,
it convulsed through tortured frame. Drop of blood
met callow youth, and the most curious feat of
nature occurred. Tender flower bloomed, flower of
infinite beauty, of consummate shape. Without the
petals shone of petty pink and blushing rose. Within
a fire burned - with pain, with passion, with blood.
And salvation was created in the midst of the earth.

Nature