Lycanthropy

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Recommended Citation
Available at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/laureate/vol8/iss1/33

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Those wolves are at your heels, boy.
Your riding-hood, red with sun down,
ribbons around the mid November moon.
Your tiny ears quiver at the pulse of snow
falling leonine across your slimming hips.
Pressing clear beside the moistened earth,
your hoary footsteps are fossils that archaeologists
cement to prove the truth of Russian myth.
Your sugarplum-amber scent fills their muscles
with hard-won lust when they push themselves
through winter air dense as morning fog.
They will find you strung high in the evergreen canopy,
shake its needles and cones down with you, boy,
spilling your jar of honey and pot of jam.
They will make a meal of your bowels, saving your
bedroom thighs for dessert spread thick with honey.
Boy, do you not know the path to your grandmother’s
Wood-smoked kitchen? You are not a hunter.
Loose the thick, bloodless marrow
of their bones before her bedposts
laced in the scent of geraniums.
Those howling cries have found you,
tearing through your lungs hung like wallpaper.
Their silver-bullet-riddled jaws, pulling you to your knees,
gnash at the image of a boy so pale
under the dying light of Lupus major
until your plum body cracks beneath
those yellowing fangs. They will devour your tongue. So,
when the lunar face glows full bright through skyless dark,
your wailing will be theirs. And, if you escape,
through that forest—thicket, fir—
you will not be the hunter.
For I, in parting the Red Sea of your iris,
have dreamt of tearing the flesh of your thighs
from snow white bones in strips of papyrus,
and will crawl under your bedroom door, boy,
and ride you till the windowpanes split
under the weight of your blue wide howl.