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Forest

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Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters is an international literary journal dedicated to publishing works encompassing, but not limited to, the Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. The Journal is especially dedicated to presenting the arts and letters of those communities that have long been under-represented within the creative discourse of the region, among them: Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, Maroon societies, and the Asian and Amerindian societies of the region. Calabash has a strong visual arts component.

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Susan Brennan

FOREST

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I Night Through Branches

The deepest mother.
In many ways, unforgiving.
You imply claws, fur –
that which is long lost to me.
And the sorrow that craves me forward.
An owl looks down at me;
I beg for a single stroke of her secrets.

II Nocturnal

Eyes glint like new copper pennies.
A bird song tingles its vein through tree tops.
A slim red fox thirsts for the lake's cool mist.
A bear lays her head on moss, sniffs the air
for hidden honeys; flower's night-nectars.

III This is the Experience – I don't know what it Means

We found a patch of wild blackberries.
I said, *Taste the veins of God.*
You said, *Hurry back to me – your eyes have ferned.*
Black butterflies darken the sky,
their hearts, humming garnets,
the roots who spoke our names.

IV Your Appetite Will Make You Aim

She trusts her hunger and faces
jaws poised to snap her in half.
Her arrow whistles down the guarded darkness,
Sinks deep and bright blood lights the way.
she feels a pang in the back of her own throat,
steps into the carcass mouth, which is her mouth;
nestles into her tongue's bed.

V Frog with a Green Back

Slick river hollows
rocks; unexpected pockets –
the frog knows them all.

VI I Found the Directions Just When I Lost You

I know I can't fly to him – only so many things are possible.
There is a love you watch like it's a bright green snake
crawling away from you, into the grass, weeds, brush, leaves –
and then everything is green, becomes that love.
You have no choice but to spread your legs,
blossom for the birds.

VII Song for a Spider

Your web contained me with its beauty.
Being with you was like being always
on the verge of breaking through its pattern.
I was amazed how your silk killed wasps
three times your size. You fed me bits
of your murders and I believed
I would never be prey –

VIII Purple Throated

The song came shyly, soft pulsing –
a place I've never been.
Drenched. Foliage flushed by shadow.
Beyond green pigment into the soul of green, green
spiked with black harmony,
and when light catches an edge,
the vision of possibility.