

SCENT BECAME FLESH

Else leaned forward, her cheek resting between Tsen's shoulder blades, her arms clasped around his waist, the couple rocking back and forth atop the stallion Rosh, who carried them onward through the windy chilled night. Clumps and ridges of snow remained on a ground that was otherwise composed of frozen mud, brown grass, frigid puddles. When they had set out in the late morning, Else and Tsen had been dressed in their lightest garments, and Else held a parasol over them as Rosh carried them on. Now they were bundled in jackets and caps, and Else nuzzled closer against Tsen's back.

Rosh came to a stop.

Tsen bristled, and Else sat upright, looking around with him. In the moonlight, vague darkness crispened piece by piece into the shapes of a field strewn with boulders.

"Oh!" Tsen remarked. "We're here. I had nodded off."

Else reached back and gave Rosh's flank a rub.

The partners dismounted. Else stretched. She looked up at the full moon, and inhaled deeply of the cold windy air. There were smells of freshly melted water, and also smells of freshly uncovered decay.

Else came up to Tsen, who was tending to Rosh's tackle. She made a gesture of rubbing her nose. "We should make this."

Tsen stepped back from Rosh for a moment, closed his eyes, and inhaled through his nose, slowly and deeply. He nodded. "I will remember it."

Else kissed her husband. When their lips separated, Tsen gave Else another peck on the cheek before returning to Rosh's tackle. Else walked down Rosh's side, keeping a gentle hand on him, and opened his saddle bag. Reaching inside, she retrieved an oakwood drum, its lid fastened by a wooden bolt.

She began wandering off into the field, holding the drum. Tsen called some words of encouragement after her, though Else was already mentally in another space. Guided by the joyful familiarity of a happy tradition, Else arrived at the center of the field, where there was a circle of grass that was free from rocks, into which the wind blew on this night from five directions. Else smelled deeply of the wind yet again, and then unlocked the drum. From it, she withdrew the first of five candles, and set it upon a boulder at the north of the clearing. With a spell word, her tongue set a spark which ignited the candle, and she inhaled deeply of the candle's scent:

Hair: the thick smell of it on the nape, and the thin smell of it on the belly, it is the most distinct of your form, the least comparable, the most exalted, and here, the most appreciated. Blessed be the smell of thine hair.

Else walked from the north of the circle eastwards, lighting each of the candles as she went in a clockwise fashion:

Breath: the essence of your life, the smell of your mouth. Blessed be the smell of thine breath.

Feet: the four paws upon which you walk, padded and clawed, the scent of all that you walk upon mingled with the scent that is thine own. Blessed be the smell of thine feet.

Anus: that which you smell of your own kind, that which speaks to your health as well as to your virility. Blessed be the smell of thine anus.

Urine: the scent you leave to be found from afar, and the scent you leave upon those to whom you come the closest. Blessed be the smell of thine urine.

After lighting the last of the five candles, Else sat back against a boulder, and withdrew the final item from the drum: a jar of thick slime. She removed her garments, and as she waited, she coated an arm with the slime, and began at herself. She had prepared earlier in the day, taking Rosh in full: it was not long

before she relaxed back against the rock, her hand and forearm fully encompassed.

As she made herself ready, the winds in the field grew stronger. The five candles flickered in the five winds, carrying the scents all towards the center of the field, where gradually, as a smell comes to a nose, the scent became flesh. There in the center of the field stood a dog the size of a horse, his coat the color and appearance of smoke from a candle.

Else removed her hand from herself, stood, and walked to the dog.

The enormous dog turned to her. Seeing it was her, he wagged his smokey tail. Already, he made a grabbing motion with his paw, ready to know her. When she arrived at him, he lowered his nose to her penis, and deeply inhaled the scent of her testicles. She stroked his warm head with her dry hand, and turned to face away from him, getting down onto her hands and knees. Teasing, she began walking forward on her hands and knees, away from him.

The enormous canine wrapped his left paw around the left side of her hip, then the right paw around the right side. All at once he was upon her, as large as a stallion, and she cried out from the overwhelming sensation. He moved rapidly for a short while, and then held her rump pressed firm against his warm underside. He pulsed inside of her.

When he was finished, he dismounted. The front of her hips was bloodied with yet another year's set of scratch marks. He licked the side of her head, and in the process of doing so, his smokey being dissipated into a greater plume, floating over the ground into the forest. Before Else's very sight, the brown of the dead grass gave way to green, to new life sprouting, to buds eager to flower.

Else collapsed flat onto the wet cold ground and sighed a sigh of relief, pleasure, happiness, fulfillment. She laid a long while in the afterglow, smelling the five candles of hair, breath, feet, anus, urine, happy that she was blessed to spend any time at all with the person spawned of the five.