

An Oracle Awakes

See her sprawled on the ground, covered so with dirt and leaves decaying that you can barely see her. Yet her form is intact, flesh still on the bones. Pale firm skin under all those centuries of decay. She stirs. A low soft moan sounds; or is it just the wind? The freshest layer of leaves rustles at the periphery of her form. It is her hands and feet, testing the life returning as rays of moonlight break through the trees like a benediction of restoration. *Light returning to enliven light gone dark in almost human form.*

Tiny beings, mostly unseen, gather to observe. They soon busy themselves with lifting debris from first her eyes, then her ears, blowing into her heart. The light expands, visible in rays from the moon through the trees, in rays going out in a circle from her heart, in a glow around each living being. The glow around the form of the Oracle begins to pulse. Lying face down through the ages, she now stirs, attended by her forest and her faithful. *And she the most faithful of them all..*

When she laid down her chalice and burned her robe all those cycles ago, she cast herself face first in despair into her favorite forest glen and her consciousness fled, not knowing for how long she would lay, only that she waited to be called. A signal predetermined and yet unknown would call her back. *Light would dance with her, in her, as her, again.*

As she stirs more strongly, the tiny beings, furry and gossamer, still. Awe and wonder fill the air and begin to weave geometries of memory in bubbles around her. One by one they seem to disappear in her. One very tiny winged being alights on her heart as she turns over, sending leaves and twigs and stones and various dimensional beings scuttling back to give her room. The winged one begins to glow and move its wings in a distinct rhythm, in synch with the heartbeat of Gaia. Newly colored light patterns pulse in that same rhythm from her heart.

As her hands begin to flutter over all the residue still covering her, she pulls the layers off from first her face and then her heart. The glow from her great Oracle heart is faintly green and gold, and begins to fill the forest glen. Trees murmur welcome. The spring sings a very ancient song of joy. Her memory begins to awaken. Rolling over once again, she

pushes herself up with arms trembling, weakened through disuse, and sits back upon her own legs to survey the scene. Shaking her long and matted hair, she finds it inextricably entwined with rock and leaf and tree. *She had merged with the world she served during her absence, so completely, she had become bound by it.*

She wants to call for help but cannot find her voice or trust who to call. Who is left to answer? A crow arrives, bringing her an arrowhead and she remembers those people, who sharpened rock and lived in honor of the natural world. She feels affection, and accepts the gift, intending to use it to extract her hair from the landscape.

"I am called to return," she says wonderingly. *"My own call, come again in a new time."* Tears leak from her eyes. She begins to breathe deeply.

The Oracle begins the task of remembering, as she draws in her memory from Nature herself through her hair. Moons and suns circle, and nearly a season, until she is at peace with her fullness. She uses the arrowhead to sever her attachments and free herself.

Able to trust herself again, she lifts her vision to the sky and sees a beautiful robe awaiting her. As she considers how to best reach for it, it drifts gracefully to her, shimmering gold and green by turns, as if it, too, were alive. Powerful currents lift and wrap the robe around her. A woven grass belt appears and positions itself around her waist to hold the robe perfectly in place. A gold leaf brooch arrives and arranges itself securely on her left shoulder. Invisible hands place themselves on her heart, front and back, to support her and seal her vow:

"I Am Oracle."

She smiles the smile of confident knowing, clear purpose, empowered choice.

"I Return."