

# Calabash

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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.