

ANIMUS
DREAMS

JESSALYN WAKEFIELD

LINDSEY

Lindsey do you remember the day you stitched pearls across your labia? It was exquisite and I liked how round your blood looked, shaped by those sea gems. I was jealous. I wanted to imitate you, so I scraped holes into my teeth and placed kernels of wheat there. Which isn't the same at all, and besides, it was shoddy work. Now I just look unhealthy.

*Lindsey my animus is cruel; **he** is a Capricorn and **he** is the Devil. Your animus wants to seduce you. Mine wants me dead.*

*You told me you are marrying again. I haven't heard from you since your birthday. Are you still in the South. Did you find your summer dress. Did **he** give you a ring and was it for the right finger. Did you take my old lover as your lover, did you like the color of her eyes. I always did. I wouldn't mind if you did. If you took her, I mean. I'd just like to warn you. But that would only come off as jealousy. So I won't. 'Our ideas of satisfaction are different.' You were right about that. I miss your lessons. I don't know if I miss you. I don't think I even can. This is not from any lack of fondness.*

Silver bells and cockle shells. Lindsey I'm frightened.

THE INITIATE

There's you on the couch: bored and brunette, entertaining yourself with your own purr:

Green Green Green Green.

Your voice is a sugared lime. You need to swallow that. You put your voice in your mouth, now swallow it. I learned submission from my animus and you will learn it from me. No I will not flip the record. Do not bother me for tenderness. You will not have cream, you'll take your coffee black. You will know the thing by its absence. Know the bright smooth fat by the thin acidic twang.

THE PACIFIC
NORTHWEST

*The last time I saw my animus in Washington we were Mormons. **He** left me in a cabin in the woods, **he** said,*

“Watch the children, fight the werewolves off, keep the house. Your sister-wives are incompetent.”

***He** was too thin and hollow to be a werewolf **himself** so I knew **he** was truly going to leave us all, there in those dark woods, to marry one more woman.*

*The forest was infested. We didn't have a chance. My sister-wives were hysterical, the children screamed horribly: etc, etc. I was silent and my hands held many knives. But that's my body spread out behind me. That's the shape of **his** kindness.*

ONE

The first time I submit:

He places in front of me a bowl, a wooden spoon, a handful of ground teeth. Three straight blades, five small lemons and a sterile cotton cloth.

*“What am I supposed to make with all this?” I ask.
“Healing,” he says.*

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