

Song of Tara

p m swanson



Song

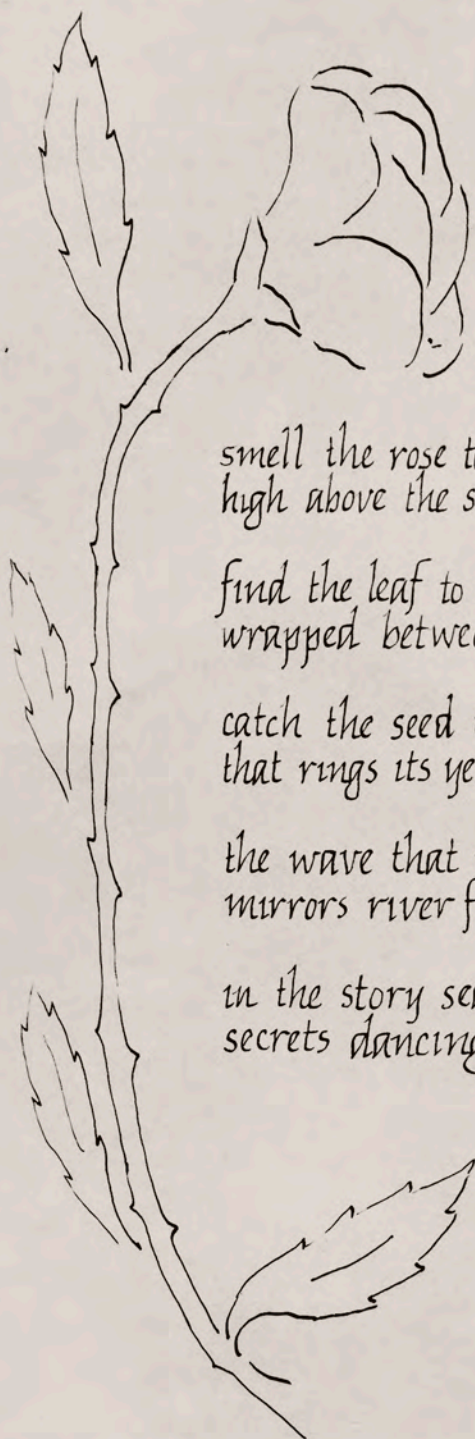


of



Tara

p.m. SWANSON  
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smell the rose to know the thorn  
high above the singing stone ~

find the leaf to touch the song  
wrapped between the leaf and worm ~

catch the seed to search the tree  
that rings its years in history ~

the wave that plays a strand of hair  
mirrors river field and shore ~

in the story search to find  
secrets dancing through each name.

Once before time there was a child of golden born. She grew happily and long in the warm house where her parents lived like gods and watched over her hurts and joys. Soon there came a day when her feet could carry her longer distances away and her voice knew where to look for questions. The day had come for her to gather up her dreams and search out her name.

child born to child growing  
calm of evening closing may  
in the shining of the home  
sunshine hair and cloudless eye ~

into summer deep of green  
followed leaf to autumn change  
soft the shivering of snow  
to meet the daisies opening ~

father mother laugh to step  
closer further from the hand  
soon and sooner caught by age  
to search the promise of a name ~

east of spring the wakening  
north of spring the christening  
south of spring the questioning  
west of spring the wandering.



She left the yard that had held her playing and headed towards the riverside park. The fresh breeze tossed her hair and the sun held her warm. For a long time she walked across the thick grass, under the bending willow trees. When she came to the river she stopped and watched the rush of water. As she listened words grew into her ears.

know me quiet  
know me slow  
the deep of deep  
the calm of calm  
know me old and always young ~

know me murky  
know me clear  
snows and rains  
and lakes to feed me  
always going always here ~

know me rapid  
know me shallow  
straight and winding  
wide and narrow  
rich in rainbows rich in shadows ~

know me gentle  
know me strong  
pounding rock  
and shifting sand  
know me boundless know me bound ~

know me nameless  
know me long  
I am one  
and I am many  
where I am is where I belong.

She clapped her hands. "That's a beautiful song. Thank you. I wonder if you could help me? I'm looking for my name."

The river laughed. "Why a name? What would that do for you? I am called by many names, but even if I was called by no name I would fill the lakes and carve the valleys."

"But I am not you," she answered. "In my world names are important. We carry them with us all our lives."

The river slowed a little. "True. You move a different life than I. If you wish a name, it must carry its own story, and its own song. I will give you a beginning. I will give you time. Between beginnings and endings you measure your growth by years. Let your name begin with T."

The river rushed on leaving her with a song to carry in her name.

question time to answer time  
laugh to hear it inside out  
fast and slow it moves a line  
it never stops its never gone ~

question time to answer time  
run to hear it outside in  
a short year long a long year short  
it is and it has never been ~

past and future out of now  
both different and both the same  
like gardens waving left and right  
beside the road in flower change.

The girl picked a yellow daisy from the river bank and threw it into the water to show her thanks. She walked on with the beginnings of her name



The coolness of the grass welcomed her feet. She began to run for the joy of feeling the softness catch her toes. She ran until out of breath, then let herself fall to the ground. As she laid on the rich green, watching wisps of cloud trace the sky, she became aware of a gentle murmuring.

forest field sidewalk crack  
we lace the soil white in roots ~

morning green to evening brown  
in pouring sun and shining rain ~

we welcome bare of foot in race  
we knit the dreamer miracles ~

seabed to the dawning mist  
we web the sleepers to forget ~

last to pass the first to come  
pasture mountain garden ruin ~

quilted short or spearing long  
ragged rock to polished lawn ~

we are the grass our work undone  
we are movement we are one.

She sat up and asked softly, "Grass ~ do you know my name? The river gave me a T for time, but that is only a beginning. I still need to find the rest."

The grass spoke in a million whispering voices. Then she heard, "A. For angels. So you may learn to find the angel that lives in everyone, and is that part of you that loves us."

The girl was uncertain. "But I don't feel like an angel."

A sound like chuckling gathered around her. "Names carry mysteries to be revealed throughout life. The true angel is not the carrier of good and bad. Good and bad are words that others use to describe what they like or don't like. The true angel part of you is the part that loves life and the love of life can only be good. Carry it with you in your name, and learn to see it in others."

The girl smiled her thanks. As she walked on, the grass grew a song to go with her.

angel music lives the soul  
exploding birth in life to be ~  
move within to burst beyond  
created frameworks to explore ~

clear the glass that fronts the eye  
to soar the angles of the sky  
forever rearranging face  
pulsing cloud to cloud lessness ~

in the laughter in the rain  
the power to be ~ the power to be ~  
in the vision that is man  
the source of ceaseless energy.

She puzzled over the words while heading towards the trail that led back to the willows. The wind lept and dove around her, sweeping her face and tossing her hair into her eyes. When she shook her head, a rush of sound caught her hearing.



breeze and howl  
storm and rush  
large and small  
swift and soft ~  
by separating  
we unite  
till cell spaced cell  
the earth vibrates ~

gasp and torrent  
sigh and hush ~  
roar and whistle  
murmur hum ~  
inside silence  
sound becomes  
a dance in air  
to play the ear ~

toss and whirl  
curl and twist  
in every where  
in every when ~  
thought in action  
we are song  
we live the breath  
in every one ~

gust and current  
wail and flow  
we sing ~ we race  
we blow ~ we blow ~  
feel us ~ hear us  
joy through tears ~  
know us ~ know us  
we are prayer

Turning around as if trying to figure out where the voice came from, she asked, "Wind, can you help me find my name? The river gave me a T for time. The grass gave me an A for angels. I need to find out what comes next."

The wind calmed and blew thoughtfully. "R. It is fitting that the next letter be R. Let it stand for rings. The meanings are double. It can be the sound like the ringing of bells in the wind, or the ring of truth in a voice. And it can be the circle like the path you are walking. From home you return home, older and wiser than when you left. Different and yet the same. Carry the secrets of R in your name."

The wind picked up speed to play a song in the air above her.

rings of water  
rings of light  
rings of laughter  
intersect ~

flakes of snow  
and grains of sand  
circle secrets  
born in dream ~

thought to heart  
around around  
outward inward  
lives entwine ~

sky by vision  
wind by song  
the planet spins  
from dawn to dawn ~

around the light  
that rings the eye  
worlds inside  
worlds fly,



The girl waved her thanks and walked on under the giant willows. Her feet carried her closer and closer to home, but she still hadn't found the rest of her name. Long pale branches brushed the top of her head. She looked up, suddenly aware of sounds in the swaying leaves.

we grow ~ we grow  
in slow from seed to sleep  
branching images to trace  
the winding of our roots ~

we are ~ we are  
searchers earth and air  
to touch to feel and to create  
through leaf and twig and sap ~

alive ~ alive  
we see where sight is blind  
we carve our bark in whisperings  
that echo cold and warm ~

we hear ~ we hear  
each stare each step each voice  
like rainbow colours deepening  
the richness we embrace.

"Trees," she asked, "can you help me find the rest of my name? The river gave me T for time. The grass gave me A for angel. The wind gave me R for rings. Do you know what comes next?"

"Hmmm," the willows hummed softly above her. "You are young and the light in your hair is like the light of the sun on our branches. The sun is always. Listen..."

into always  
like forever  
into always  
touch the ever ~

sun and rain  
reflections cast  
between the veils  
of first and last ~

day and noon  
and evening stretch  
like memories  
of ordered flight ~

every line  
that writes the skin  
knows what will be  
and what has been ~

the nails of  
the fingers hide  
a dozen lifetimes  
in disguise ~

each eye knows  
in multiple  
directions travelled  
not to go ~

the instant deeper  
than recall  
commands the always  
always now.

"The secret of always. Carry that with you in your name to learn the magic it holds. Your next letter is A. Let your name be Tara."



Tara laughed and threw her arms around the tree trunk  
to hug her thanks. The willows hummed contentedly,  
and watched over her happiness as she ran home.

child racing innocence  
beyond the windows time and place ~  
why the silence that you wear?  
where the wisdom in your stare?

often while at play you pause  
and gather in the distances  
as if a voice had caught your ear  
in words that no one else could hear ~

child born to innocence  
a strangeness walks across your face ~  
what secrets hide behind your eyes?  
where the suddenness of age?

