

FABLE FACTORY

IN THE NAME OF THE QUEEN

SYEDA ERUM NOOR

Drenched in sweet moonlight yet hidden in part,
 She sat on an oak tree that lived in the dark.
 With a crown made of silver and a gown made of dreams,
 Woven and stitched from black beads at the seams.
 Alive as she was, yet dead as could be,
 She watched the fair King ascend from the sea.
 Swinging her legs, she forgot what's at stake
 Her young, ancient soul and her King's throne to take.
 Too smitten by tales that he'd spun just for her,
 Her dark eyes on her moonlit skin would slow to a blur.
 "For I am what is," the King told his men.
 "What has been, what shall be, both now and again."
 Lies spun in gold web would tangle her feet,
 coaxing the Queen of the "dark" and "deceit".
 For the inverted sea that split on its own,
 Was never the Queen's unless it was stoned.
 "Your beauty is mine," said the King in delight.
 "A glow to my light and akin to my sight."
 The sounds of his words surrounded her heart
 Once again, the Queen was lost, she was in the dark.
 The men and the women who toasted the King
 Were guards to the same woman wearing his ring.
 For the Queen only ruled the evil you see
 With the wonder and glimmer of childlike decree.
 In his wake rose white knights, while darkness would flee
 But when time came to sleep, it was time for the Queen.
 As folktales and songs went, 'twas time for deceit.
 Darkness fled back to claim what belonged
 To it and the Queen and to those who were wronged.
 Children were warned of a wrath never seen
 Locks clicked in place and fear settled in.
 Silence and fear, brewed evil in contempt
 Seeped out in hushed whispers, free from exempt.
 "In the name of the Queen!" the voices echoed
 Stealing her name as she wandered meadows.
 Her whispered coaxes went and sprinkled their sleep
 Ridding their monsters and counting their sheep.
 Her scent was like rainfall wrapped in fresh winter dew
 Her hum so lulling, till dark turned to blue.
 When time came to retreat behind bars of shadows
 Evil dusted its hands, with pride in its show.
 When asked by the Queen, her head still in clouds
 Evil denied any part in the fouls.
 "We did as you pleased," he lied through his teeth.
 "Spread joy for the children and peace as agreed."
 Tranced from the dreams that she'd woven again
 She smiled as she counted from zero to ten.
 The sea that lay still in its sleep so serene
 Shuddered to life with the rise of the King.
 Eyes void of sleep, yet somewhere far away
 The Queen wakes back in up in her prison to pray
 That her people would see not darkness and deceit
 But see her as clearly as they saw the King.
 That darkness was only the absence of light
 The evil was brewed within and in sleight.
 Bound by restraints, the Queen only hopes
 That her men and her women won't chant but will gloat
 Of the sweet, serene peace that grows in her wake.
 And the night, once lost, the Queen can now take.

*Syeda Erum Noor is dangerously oblivious and has no sense of time.
 Send help at erum.noor1998@gmail.com*

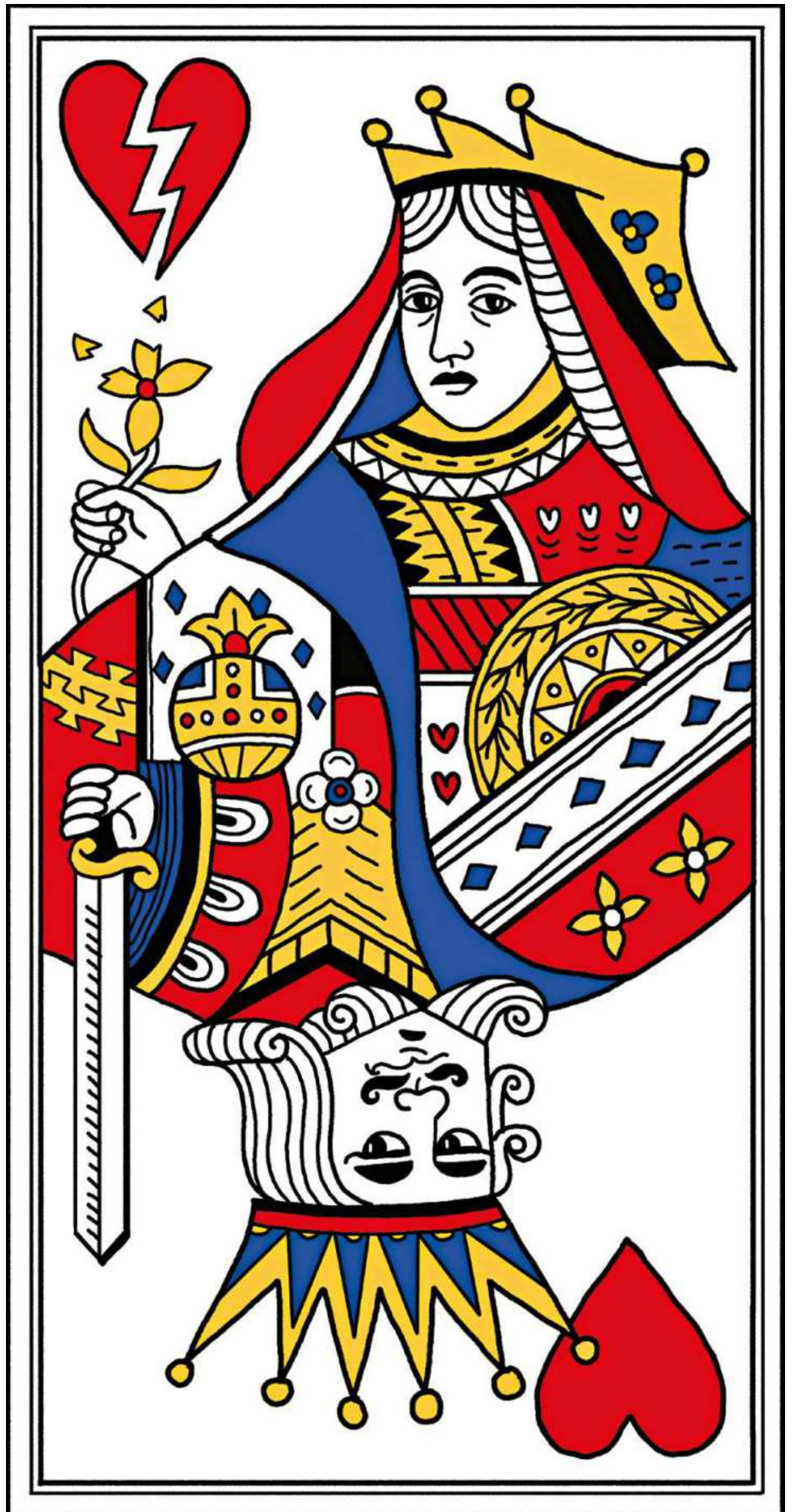


ILLUSTRATION: RIDWAN NOOR NAFIS