

Where the Magnolias Grow Wild and Free

Down in Louisiana there is a house hidden in the bayous under the moon.
By the Sabine River where the Magnolias grow wild and free near the sea,
Spanish moss flows like waterfalls from the trees lining the streets.
If you listen, you can hear the swamp blues along the Baton Rouge. Rhythm
guitar, sultry saxophone and the Cajun accordion making ripples in the water.
There is a woman named Josephine, whose veins flow full of southern magic.

In the purple shadows, Madame Marie grew a mistress of magic.
Josephine learned the art of dark kanga under the blood red moon,
foreshadowing power to come like the wrath of Gustave upon the sea.
Musty departed ancestors walked the violet-lit streets,
while her beauty was frozen in her features. The immortal rhythm
of the forever-young moves like the gentle sway of running water.

Where black steel lattice fences covered with trinkets of fresh rainwater
surround the old house with peeling white paint, keeping the magic
from escaping, a sacrifice was planned but a curse was made in the moon-
lit night echoing like the dreary melody of a distant violin rising from the sea.
Can you hear the ghost of Beauregard whisper "Shiloh" in the streets?
A lulling come-hither of voices rising from the grave, quickening your heart's
rhythm.

Immortal love drips like single particles of sand in an hourglass. The rhythm
of a broken heart ceases leaving blood to boil like water
in a red, hot kettle. Love forbidden by the bindings of magic.
The lovers made a vow to love through life and death on a moon-
less night in late November. Emotions found peace by wandering the shores of the sea,
when she could no longer hide from the haunting vestiges of lost love lingering
in the streets.

Red brick dust lines the floors of the doors on the streets.
Her thumping heart beats like a quick drum rhythm.
A rose-scented, cross-shaped candle in a basin of oil and water
Chalk, sulfur, blood and hair: The foul aroma of dark magic
hangs in the air. Heaviness hovers like the creeping moon;
Deities wash over her like blustering waves in the sea.

Her milk-filmed eyes looked as cloudy as the stormy sea
Her possessed screams rumbling through the desolate streets
French connotations rolled off her tongue in staccato rhythms
"It is time Lord, to break these chains of the Devil's hold. Let water

wash over me, Lord, cleanse me of this sin foretold.” She could feel the evil magic causing her convulsing body to collapse into a silent coma under the eclipsed moon.

Thirty days under the Louisiana colored sky, while the moon was in full bloom and the rhythm of the calm sea seemed to swoon, there was a mysterious man standing near the water, far from the streets of Bourbon: A man whose eyes had a slight gleam of magic.

—*Brittany Violet Long*