

Susan Schaeffer / SHE STAYS AWAKE

In the odd hours of the night
The moon has no face or hands.
Time runs backwards; time is declawed
Like a cat.

I know that the trees can move
Like people, especially
The olive tree, with its gnarls,
And I know

That under your clothes
You are all painted over
With animals, and crescents,
And stars full of horns.

Perhaps you have done this to keep me away.
I am not sure of this yet.
I know it is dangerous to sleep.
Then all of you paint on the sky

And your clouds paint animals
And crescents, and headpieces of horns.
When I wake up, I am under the spell.
Take off your clothes

And tell me the truth.
I wish you would sleep
Like the dead,
Cloudy shapes forming and passing over
Your cold, heavenly skin.

Then I could sit in a tree
And watch;
Then the tree and I could come closer
And watch
Then it would fold its five branches

Over my two breasts
And I could close my two eyes.