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The Scarecrow

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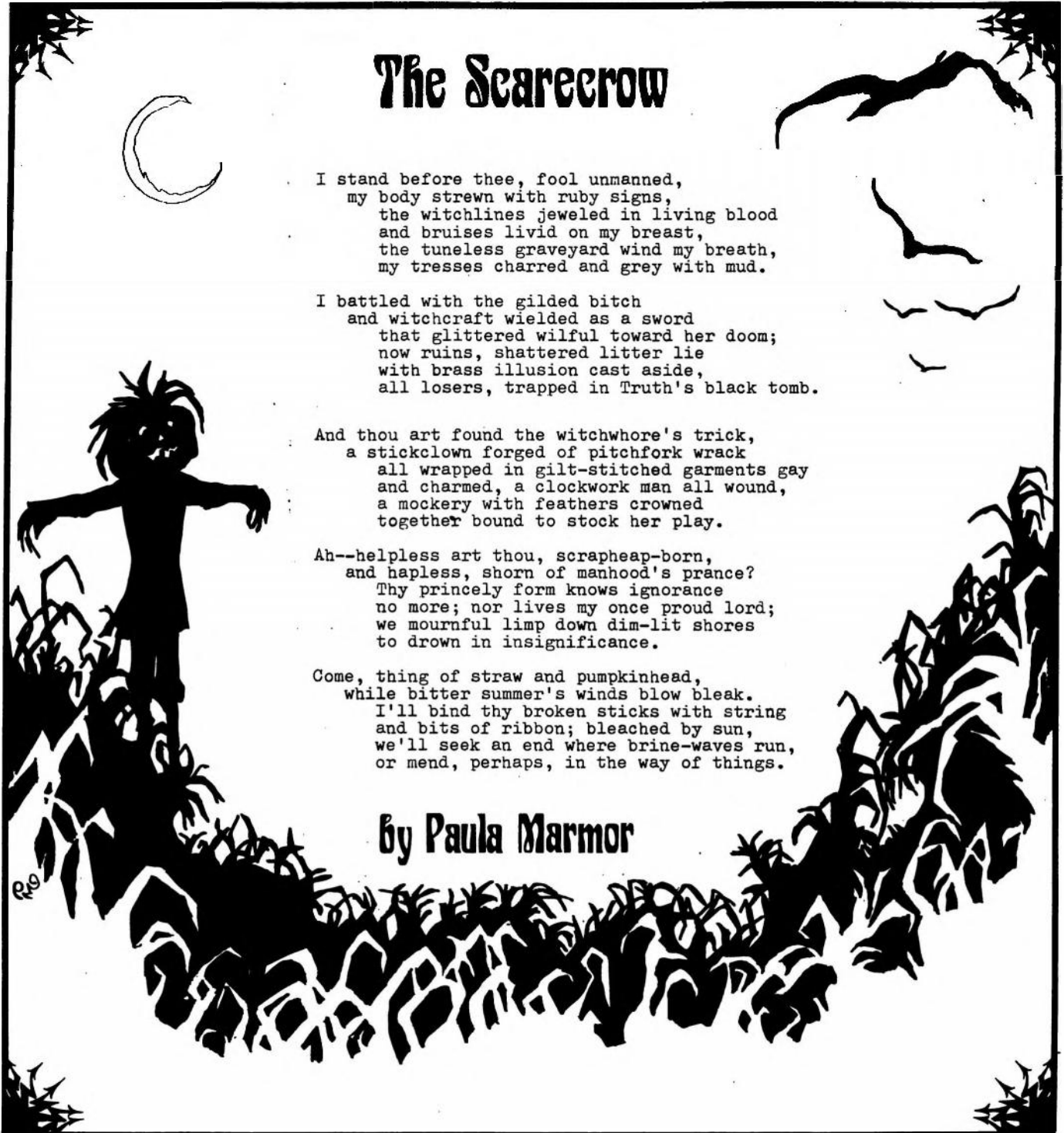
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Perhaps the only thing Tasha should learn is not to tell so much about her characters which reads like synopsis, but show these things, allowing the desired information to seep through conversation and situation. It's a very fine story so far, and if it doesn't run off to a predictable and trite ending it could be excellent.

Even after reading the Szeftel serial I think her map is empty and unsuggestive. Does not give any impression of fantasy, but looks like English countryside.

Myth I would define as a constantly recurring pattern of human thought and experience.

It might go to the Jungian racial memory/archetypes business. I believe that the handling of the religious elements is the most important thing in creating a fantasy world. (2nd is the geography)...you have to decide which of your imaginary gods, if any, are real...this then determines the culture and behavior of the inhabitants. Which in turn influences your plot, etc. I am basically interested in anything with mythic undertones, and have a noted weakness for religious science fiction. (Also for light treatments of folklore--there's a story in the new CRAS about a Jewish vampire who went into a 1000-year sleep to evade the Nazis.)



The Scarecrow

I stand before thee, fool unmanned,
my body strewn with ruby signs,
the witchlines jeweled in living blood
and bruises livid on my breast,
the tuneless graveyard wind my breath,
my tresses charred and grey with mud.

I battled with the gilded bitch
and witchcraft wielded as a sword
that glittered wilful toward her doom;
now ruins, shattered litter lie
with brass illusion cast aside,
all losers, trapped in Truth's black tomb.

And thou art found the witchwhore's trick,
a stickclown forged of pitchfork wrack
all wrapped in gilt-stitched garments gay
and charmed, a clockwork man all wound,
a mockery with feathers crowned
together bound to stock her play.

Ah--helpless art thou, scrapheap-born,
and hapless, shorn of manhood's prance?
Thy princely form knows ignorance
no more; nor lives my once proud lord;
we mournful limp down dim-lit shores
to drown in insignificance.

Come, thing of straw and pumpkinhead,
while bitter summer's winds blow bleak.
I'll bind thy broken sticks with string
and bits of ribbon; bleached by sun,
we'll seek an end where brine-waves run,
or mend, perhaps, in the way of things.

By Paula Marmor