



VIRGIN

poems

SANDRA RIDLEY



VIXEN

Sandra Ridley

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For those who feel unsafe—

T HICKET

*You tried to talk some sense into her.
You're going to get even, lying in wait.
And soon it will all be over—your honey,
your nectar, your honey flower. Hush,
hush.*

A little honey, wild clover, and nectar.
In a land flowing with clover and honey, you went to her nectar.
What is sweeter than honey. Worms after wild honey.
Blood and clover in her fur.

A curse.



A land abundant.

What is sweeter than nectar in your mouth—
honey under your tongue.



She fed you honey and blossoms and balm. And you came for her.
Caught—her honey remains but your scent does not.



A fearful sight and a great sign—a streak of red
and it's frightening to fall by your hand.

You desire to make us few.



In the bleak,
she fled from the ferocity and wrath upon her.



As you take your fill, fill a wellspring with blood, as you fill the land,
the house fills with violence.

You take her fur, a curse,
an oath.



And whosoever is of willing heart, you let them.
And whosoever gathers, you let them.

Whosoever receives the mark.
Whosoever comes after.

Whosoever denies.



A cruel drink from the well.

And where there is no spring, no water, no river, she finds no rest.

Is there shelter?

There is never.



And every one who would see her would shame her.
No grace in their eyes.



And it sickens me, it does, and who wouldn't despair?
There are some who don't despair. I do not want to know them. I know them.

I do not want to know them.



A scorch to the branches, a most vehement flame of buckthorn and fir,
a torching—as you stalk, eyes ablaze.

As if to terrify and it is somewhat terrifying.

Your fire will turn on you.

Before
the honey flowers
begin again
their blossoming.



Clover and laurel and thistle
velvet and sumac
muskroot and sundew and baneberry
indigo and ironwood and primrose
crocus and cherrychoke
eyebright and bindweed
bedstraw and gentian and nightshade
moonseed and coltsfoot
panic grass and bloodroot and hyssop
loosestrife and boneset
goldenseal and sedge and lady fern
devil's bit and daisy and aster
violet and ivy—every leaf will wither.

You will suffer the same.



The blossoms fall as dust.
And she, small as dust, for dust she is.
So say you.

The blossoms of the dust will cover you.
And your bones too will be dust.

Silver as dust, gold as dust—
ash falls
to the honey flower.



After the trembling takes hold.



A wicked plot to trap her paw—and your eye will have no pity.
Do you want dominion and to take pleasure?



I feel no pleasure in the death of her.



Wilderness—
a wasteland howling wild.

Unto the ends of the earth—
if an end will come for us, let it befall.

The end will come to pass.

The ends of knives, the ends of staves, the ends of traps.

Imagine that.

