

PAMELA WAX

The Woman Who:
A Found Poem

The woman who lived her life backwards
who looked both ways and drank her own reflection
gave birth to her mother

She knew everything
 who fell from the sky
 who read too much and borrowed memories
 who owned the shadows and wouldn't die

She named things
measured the heavens
mapped the ocean floor
She named God and fell from grace
She thought she was a planet and watched over the world

She lost her face and made men cry
pretended to be who she was

She knew too much but could keep secrets
She breathed two worlds and stole my life

She fell in love for a week
heard color
She tried to be normal

She was the woman who spilled words all over herself
who lost her names
She couldn't remember but didn't forget

She was a woman who waited but wouldn't
She died a lot yet wouldn't die
made love to storms and slept with men

to take the war out of them
She married a cloud
walked into the sea
was swallowed by a whale
She became my mother

ABOUT THE POEM & AUTHOR

“The Woman Who” was created from book titles. About the poem and the process of composing it, Pamela Wax writes:

“The Woman Who: A Found Poem” is compiled from book titles I gleaned when searching the internet for the words *a woman who* or *the woman who*. Most of the scores of titles were discarded, leaving me to play with and organize the final form you see here. While many words were edited out of the original titles, only the words *and* and *she* have been added.

When I wrote this poem, I did not yet fully understand that found poetry was a “thing” and wondered if it was legal and/or ethical for me to use book titles in this way. I even wondered if I could use the word *write* in regard to what I did with it—it was more like creating a collage or putting a puzzle together. So, thanks to *Heron Tree*, it has been a joy to discover the many ways that found poetry can be created and to know that there are fellow creators out there!

Pamela Wax is the author of *Walking the Labyrinth* (forthcoming from Main Street Rag). Her work has appeared in *Pensive* and *Spread the Word: A Pandemic Open Mic Anthology* and is forthcoming in *Green Ink Poetry*, *CCAR Journal*, *Paterson Literary Review*, and elsewhere. Pamela also facilitates spiritual poetry workshops. She lives in the Bronx, New York, and North Adams, Massachusetts.

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