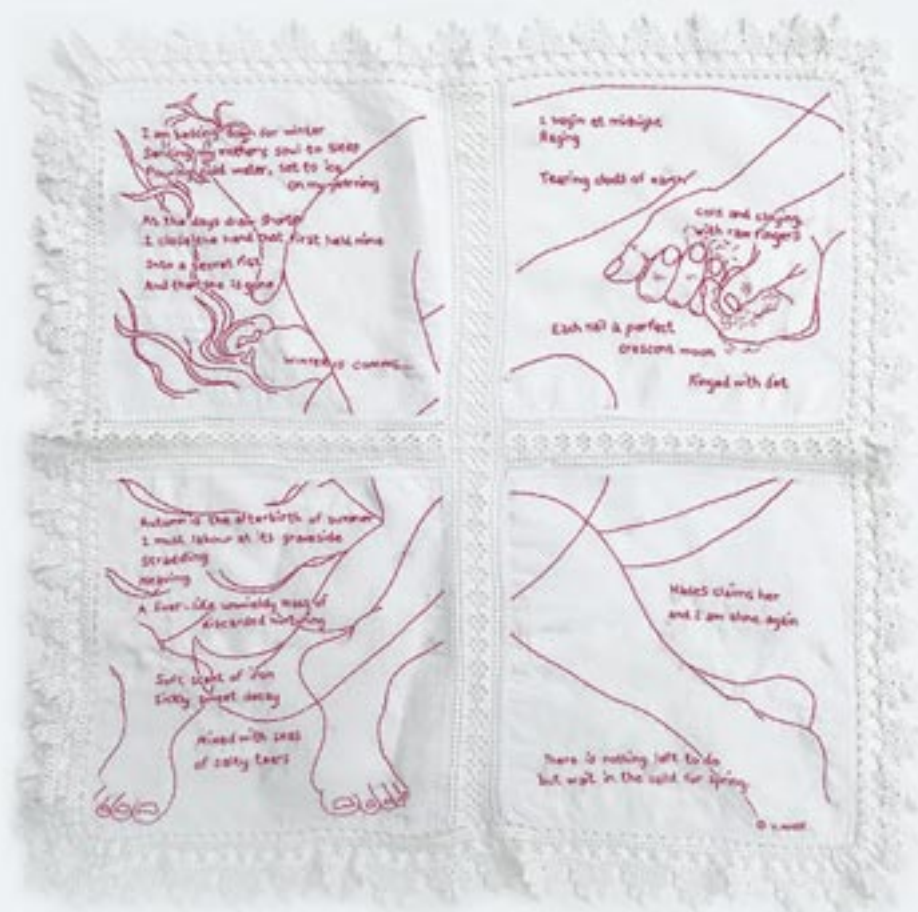


An embroidery of the poem, which first appeared in Vanessa Marr's article 'Reclaiming Stories: Invoking the goddess', co-written with Jessica Moriarty, in *Gramarye* vol. 20.



Demeter

Vanessa Marr

I am bedding down for winter
Sending my mother's soul to sleep
Pouring cold water, set to ice, on my yearning
As the days draw shorter, I close the hand that that first held mine
Into a secret fist
And then she is gone

Winter is coming

I begin at midnight
Raging
Tearing clods of earth, cold and cloying, with raw fingers
Each nail a perfect crescent moon
Ringed with dirt

Autumn is the afterbirth of summer
I must labour at its graveside
Straddling
Heaving
A liver-like unwieldy mass of discarded nurturing
Soft scent of iron
Sickly sweet decay
Mixed with seas of salty tears

Hades claims her and I am alone again
There is nothing left to do but wait in the cold for Spring

Just as ancient women told stories whilst working with cloth, as a practice-based researcher
I frequently create artwork alongside my academic writing, employing the feminine legacy
of stitch to explore and embody gendered experiences.

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Vanessa Marr