

## The Song of Seshat By Charlotte Babb

They have forgotten my name  
But I remember  
They call me The Female Scribe  
As though I was not  
The Original One who invented writing at the beginning  
Who taught Djety to write  
That baboon  
Not the "Thrice-Great One" Thoth the Ibis  
So revered of the Greeks

Foremost in the Library, indeed  
My pupil became my father-spouse-brother  
Thus the Moon loses his face and  
Nut bears her five children  
On the five days added to the year.

And I am Divided against myself  
the Great and the Small  
To hedge their bets  
Do they not remember the Letter and the Spirit  
The Words and the Meaning?

Forgotten, with no priests to call my name  
I teach the pharaoh to face his fate  
How to be born of the Mind  
How to bear the weight of the Crown and the Eye  
How to negotiate with those who come through me  
Foremost in the House of Foreigners  
I measure his reign by the words of Ra  
I record his deeds  
Measure his spoils of war  
His inundations of the Nile  
And the number of hairs on his head  
His name is known  
Because I have recorded it on my palm leaf  
On the Ished Tree of Life  
His years are long,  
As many as the tadpoles in the flood  
Because I have written it so.  
Yet he forgets my name, calling me only Mother

See the Pyramids, wonders of the world!  
I taught my priests to measure the polar star  
To find true north when no star pointed the way  
The King himself Stretches the Cord  
Marking the foundations of temples  
To other gods and his tomb  
But only with my help

Mistress of Builders  
Offerings to me are laid In the foundations  
The builders know me  
They honor me with the talismans of the tools of their trade  
Because I am the one who makes the building stand  
In this physical world, and in the unseen world  
I am the Lady of the City of Eight,  
The Birthplace of the Gods  
But in the condominiums of the gods  
They forget my name

They don't remember  
Why I wear the leopard skin of the blessed dead  
Of the funerary priests  
With its markings of the myriad stars of Nut  
I am the mother of the dead  
The soul passes through my womb  
To be born again

I am old, great-grandmother to Isis,  
Who lately came to me with her brother-husband  
In pieces so that I might Re-Member him  
I am the Mother of the Dead  
Bearing those who die into the next life  
Though she forgets my name  
She forgets on whom she called  
Though she stole the magical name of Ra  
Yet, I know, both his Name and Mine.  
The mourner who remembers

But they forget my name and  
Why my cartouche is the...  
What? A seven-petaled flower?  
I am the Lady of the House of Books  
They would know that no such flower exists.  
If they would read what is in the Library  
I am the Right and True flower in the Hand of Ra  
The blue lotus of healing

Have they also forgotten the number of months in the year,  
My feathered horns?

It is then a marijuana leaf?  
Hemp that makes the cord  
The pharaoh and his vizier stretch?  
No, that cord is leather  
But they have forgotten  
Yet my builders know how to use  
A hempen rope to move the slabs of rock  
For I have taught them physics and geometry and engineering  
I am the Lady of the Builders

Can my crown then be perhaps  
A star, and the horns of the crescent moon  
Although they look more like the horns of the Apis bull  
Or a bow? The marker of North.  
I am She of the Seven Horns, or She who Puts the Two Horns  
Seven is my number, yet  
They do not know my name

For I am she who counts the stars  
I am she who knows the Secrets  
The Lady of Years  
The Lady of Fate  
I am she who writes the deeds of the world  
Recording them forever in my library of wisdom

Many call me by many names  
Some call me Oyá, and they bring me nine flowers, the color purple  
Some call me Iwa Ayizan, the female priest,  
Who keeps the tradition with her palm leaves, as I do  
Some call me St. Clare of Assisi, who was given a palm branch on Palm Sunday  
Or Saint Therese of Lisieux, The Little Flower, who wrote much and loved flowers.

Golden they call me  
Great of Magic  
The Lady of Heaven  
The Eye of RA—  
As if we goddesses were all the same  
As if they cannot remember our names  
Nit, Au Set, Hat-Hor, Hekt and Wadjet  
My sisters, Makers of Magic: the Mysteries, Secret, Hidden,  
I am the Third with Nit the Creatrix and Nekt-Hebt the Death Mother

I am Time, Existence, History, and Memory  
Egypt lives because I remember

And I remember  
I remember Who I am  
I Remember My NAME  
My Pen is Eternity, my Ink is Forever  
As long as I remember  
Your name  
You will live

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