

A Strange Girl Like Me (Leda 2.0)

by Lillian Ann Slugocki

edit in progress

I was a peasant girl, believe me, nothing much to look at; close set eyes, one blue, one green, and a chin that dominated every feature of my face, except my nose. I was nothing like the other girls of the village, I was plain and simple. They made fun of my red hair, a wild tangle, better suited, they jeered, to the nest of a falcon or an owl. I kept to myself and tended to the animals.

When I began bleeding I thought: Now I am animal, too! I was sure I would sprout feathers or claws, but instead, breasts! It was terrifying. My mother finally guessed. When I cried: I'm afraid I'm turning into a beast, she laughed at my ignorance. And said, No, worse. Now, you're a woman. And showed me how to protect myself and not leak blood onto my skirts, how to bind my breasts.

My friend Eloise and I, a strange girl like me, mock kissed each other under a cloud mosquitoes and dragon flies. We walked hand in hand to the May dance, and shyly took our place for the quadrille. After the second round, the blood pumped in my veins in a way that both shocked and pleased me. My nipples itched. Breathless, I walked down the path that led to the pond. So much was changing.

I lay back on the hill, and slowly lifted up my skirts. I touched my legs, first my right, then my left. I rubbed my breasts. My breath was slow, then fast. I looked up, just as the moon hid behind the clouds, and then I was smothered by an animal. One that I'd never seen before; large white wings, long neck. Was it really an angel?

First, a pink tongue entered me, lips bit at me. One of us panted like a dog, and that's when I closed my eyes.

When it was over, I rearranged my skirts, and saw that I was bleeding. The pain and the pleasure were intense. My hair crackled with electricity, and it didn't occur to me to feel shame. I might have a baby in my belly. I might not ever be able to walk again. I might never be able to understand the knowledge that now beat in my breast. But I was transformed.

