

MAGIC CAROLS



Seven Wonders of a Wonderful Woman

*To my magic
mother
friend
sister soul
with all my love*

*On the 50th (plus 1) anniversary
of our friendship
November 2014*

1. THE FAIRY QUEEN



*The Fairy Queen turned up in my life half
a century ago, surrounded by elves and
impish princesses.*

*I was a girl, clumsily traversing the
uncertain territory between childhood
and the challenges of adult life.*

*She was the essence of womanhood:
radiant, mesmerizing, merry.*

And she was wise, brave, willing to listen.

*She opened my mind to the world, my
heart to new emotions, my life to the
future.*

My Magic Carol.

2. THE WANDERER



Never forget: she was born near a gold mine, but her sparkle is that of streams and stars, not of cold metal.

She is a wanderer, and always has been.

She has wandered amid lakes and forests, quais and boulevards, tiny medieval villages.

She has slept on hard ground and swinging hammocks, under starry skies and on the ice of the Arctic.

She is a wanderer, and always will be.

She will continue to explore the universe, steering the stout wheels of a walker or flying on the frail wings of poetry.

3. THE MOTHER



She mothered her own, teaching them to embrace life without fear.

She mothered me, while I played mother to her children.

She mothered mothers in Brazil, teaching them to squat and scream, breathe and be naked, recognize the majesty of childbirth.

She wrote: I delivered babies by day, and sank into my own womb in dreams.

I am the Madonna... I am the child.

4. THE LOVER



*We both lived through an age of
revolution and recklessness, and age
difference made no difference.*

*We thought we could have it all, the fun
without the fear, the belonging without
the fetters, the curiosity without the
hurt.*

*She loved and was loved, was playful and
tender; but she gave more than she was
given.*

*You can read it all in her soft smile, in
the terse blue of her eyes, in the
persistent pain in her jaw.*

5. THE WOUNDED DOE



*For those arrows I have no words, and
none for the forest.*

*I have no words for the love trampled on,
none for the gritted teeth or the
surgeon's scalpel.*

*All I can speak of is a long afternoon, a
long time ago.*

*The wounded doe trembling in my arms,
her sobs trembling in my ears: I just
want someone to hold me.*

*I held her tears, till they turned to
laughter.*

*She held my heart, and will hold it for
ever.*

6. THE ARTIST



*What drives her to Rembrandt, what
drives her to Paula Rego?*

*Art discards silly questions, yet keeps
triggering them.*

*What drove her to China, and to teach
about peasant paintings?*

*What drove her to draw herself as an old
lady, long before old age?*

*I study the drawing I cherish so much,
hanging on the wall of my study, and
can't help thinking of Anna Magnani.*

*Don't you dare retouch my wrinkles, she
said to her make up artist: it took me a
lifetime to earn them.*

7. THE REBEL



*There she is, linking arms with my mum
and her daughters, on a student march.*

*We have marched so much, shared so
much.*

*There she was linking arms with women
at Greenham, crawling out of the tent at
night to cut the fence we had circled.*

We have shared so much, dared so much.

*In Jerusalem we linked arms with
Women in Black and women in scarves,
and with bare-headed Palestinian girls
searching for freedom.*

*We have dared so much, searched so
much.*

*We shall never stop searching, never
stop linking arms.*