

Lunar Baedeker

By Mina Loy

A silver Lucifer
serves
cocaine in cornucopia

To some somnambulists
of adolescent thighs
draped
in satirical draperies

Peris in livery
prepare
Lethe
for posthumous parvenues

Delirious Avenues
lit
with the chandelier souls
of infusoria
from Pharoah's tombstones

lead
to mercurial doomsdays
Odious oasis
in furrowed phosphorous

the eye-white sky-light
white-light district
of lunar lusts

Stellectric signs
"Wing shows on Starway"
"Zodiac carrousel"

Cyclones
of ecstatic dust
and ashes whirl
crusaders
from hallucinatory citadels
of shattered glass
into evacuate craters

A flock of dreams
browse on Necropolis

From the shores
of oval oceans
in the oxidized Orient

Onyx-eyed Odaliskes
and ornithologists
observe
the flight
of Eros obsolete

And "Immortality"
mildews ...
in the museums of the moon

"Nocturnal cyclops"
"Crystal concubine"

Pocked with personification
the fossil virgin of the skies
waxes and wanes

Source: *The Lost Lunar Baedeker: Poems of Mina Loy*. Reprinted by permission of Roger Conover, Literary Executor. (1996)



Although born in England, Mina Loy worked as a poet and visual artist in Paris, Florence, and New York City, where her beauty and outlandish behavior shone at the center of several avant-garde circles. The eccentric vocabulary and syntax of Loy's free-verse poems and their sardonic treatment of love can puzzle and offend, but no reader can question the work's originality nor the poet's fierce intelligence.