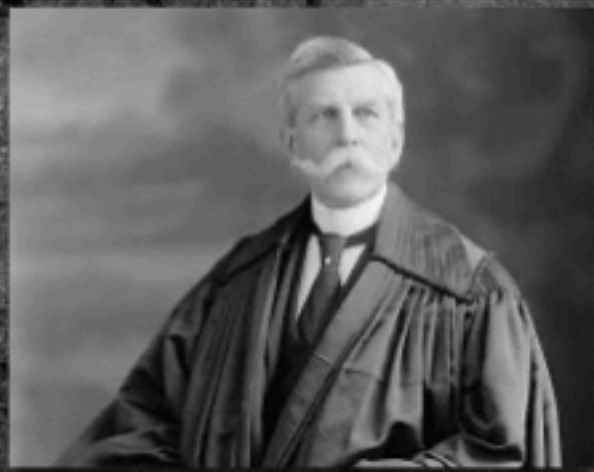




**ISAAH**  
**THE STORY BENEATH THE STORY**

His answer to our plight is passion for our peace

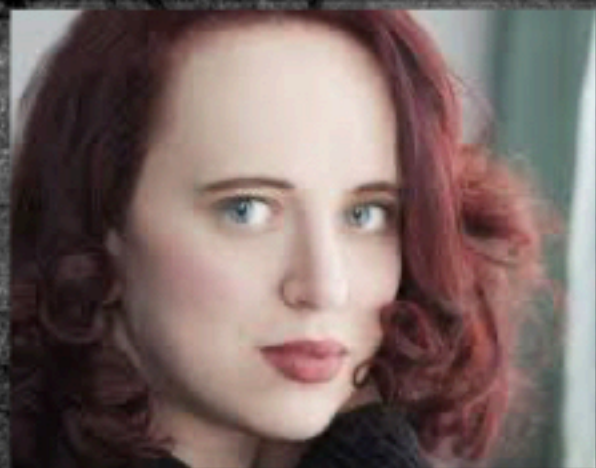


Oliver Wendell Holmes

*For the simplicity that lies this side of complexity, I would not give a fig, but for the simplicity that lies on the other side of complexity, I would give my life.*

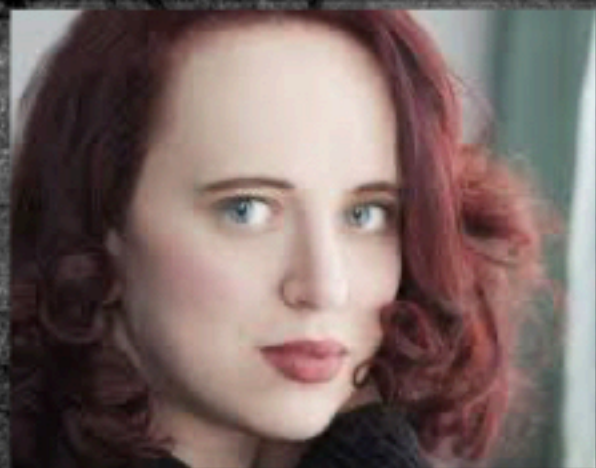
All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned—every one—to his own  
way;

v. 6



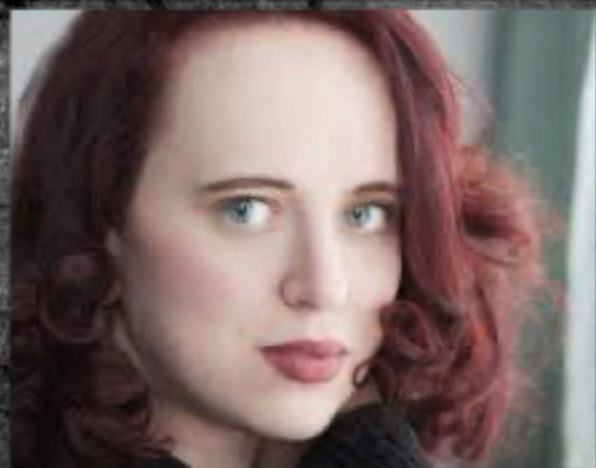
Tara Isabella Burton

You want unlimited power? You want passion? You want freedom? You want to really feel things? You want a world that is bigger and better and truer and more significant than the one you're living in, right now?



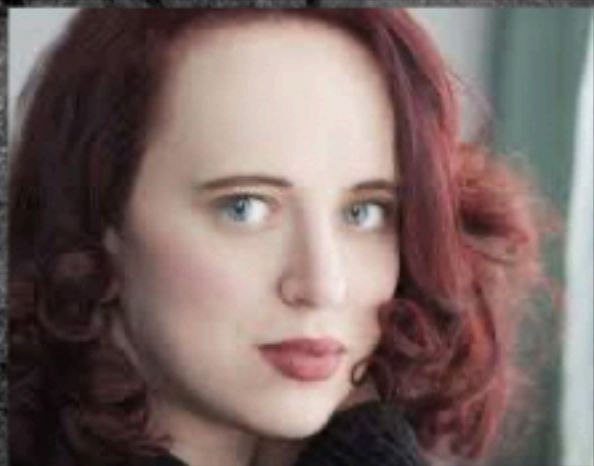
Tara Isabella Burton

Be prepared to give up something to get it. Be prepared to become someone you don't recognize. Be prepared to bet your soul. The odd thing about becoming a maenad. . . is that you're not risking your soul for anything concrete.



Tara Isabella Burton

You're not asking for riches or worldly power or for one specific person to love you. You're risking your soul to feel something, to feel the certainty that the world is enchanted, to know that magic exists at all.



Tara Isabella Burton

*I wanted to outrun the Nothing.  
There was nothing I would not  
have sacrificed—friendships,  
relationships, the blood from the  
heel of my foot—to get it.*



Christian Wiman

So long as your ambition is to stamp your existence on existence, your nature on nature, then your ambition is corrupt, and you are pursuing a ghost.



For he grew up before him like a young plant,  
and like a root out of dry ground;  
he had no form or majesty that we should  
look at him,  
and no beauty that we should desire him.

53:2

He came unto His own, but his own people  
did not receive him . . . .

*"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"*

John 1:11, 46

*"despised and rejected by men"*

*"oppressed and afflicted"*

*"pierced and crushed"*

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;  
he has put him to grief;

53:10

*this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.*

Acts 2:23



Christian Wiman

*It wasn't important to me until I reached a crisis in my life. I floated along like so many modern people, alert to a sense of otherness in some of my experiences but unwilling to give it a name. I'm a Christian because it's the language I know.*



Christian Wiman

*I'm a Christian because a god that does not suffer with us, a god that is not suffering with us right now, is either hopelessly remote or mercilessly cruel.*

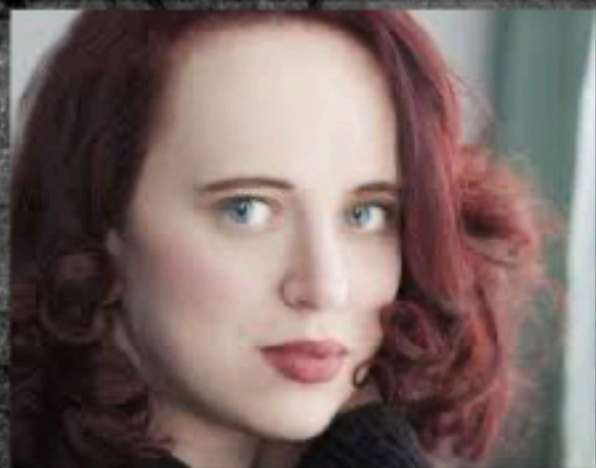
Surely he has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed him stricken,  
smitten by God, and afflicted.  
But he was pierced for our transgressions;  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that  
brought us peace, and with his wounds we  
are healed.

vv. 4, 5



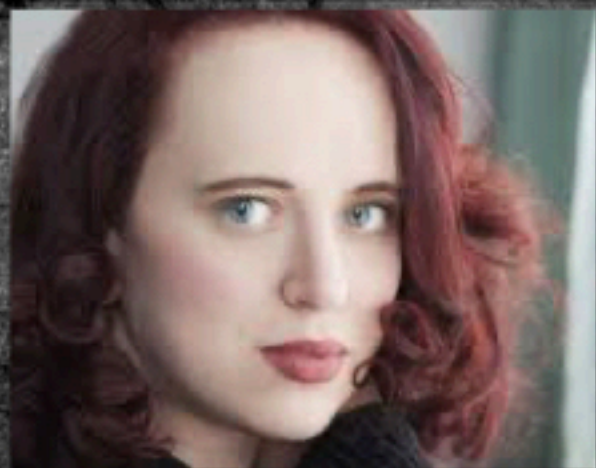
Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see  
and be satisfied;  
by his knowledge shall the righteous one,  
my servant,  
make many to be accounted righteous,  
and he shall bear their iniquities.

53:11



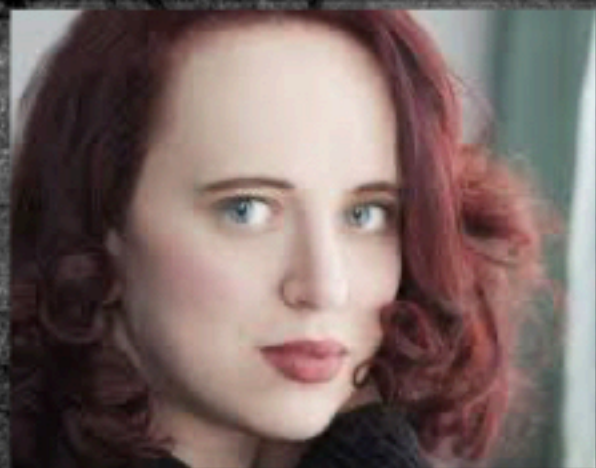
Tara Isabella Burton

I sacrificed all of myself. I emptied myself out. I hit bottom, in a thousand different ways, and got what I wanted, in a thousand more, and then, somewhere in the middle of my seeking a vague and generic sense of Poetry, I found a specific one.



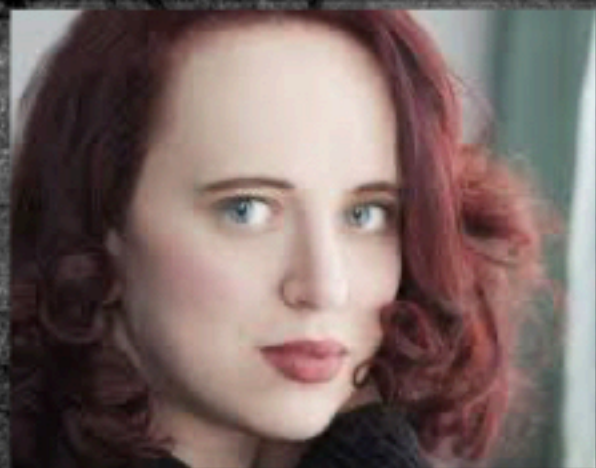
Tara Isabella Burton

One rooted not in a vague sense that magic was real and that the world could at any time be an enchanted one, but in a concrete sense that at one particular place, at one particular time, the laws of nature had been suspended.



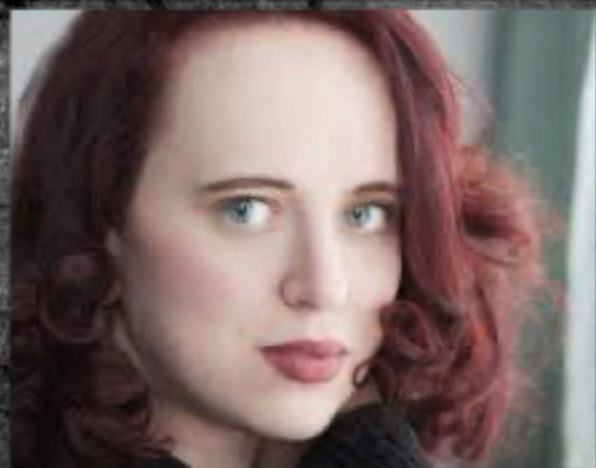
Tara Isabella Burton

*Which is to say: I became a  
Christian*



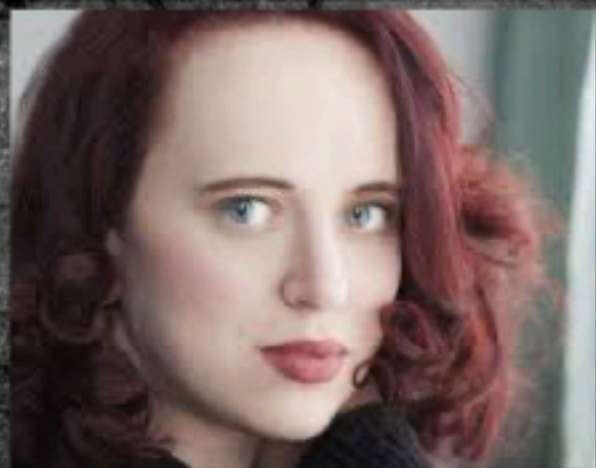
Tara Isabella Burton

The faith I found proclaimed a sanctified world, and a redeemed one—an enchanted world, if you want to call it that—but one where meanings were concrete. It offered me not just a sense of emotional intensity, but a direction in which to channel it.



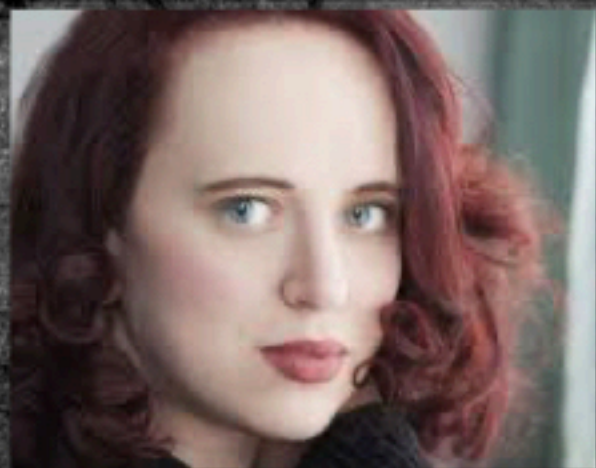
Tara Isabella Burton

*It contained magic not for the sake of magic, but rather miracle for the sake of goodness. God died and came back from the dead not because magic was real, but because love was stronger than an unmagical world.*



Tara Isabella Burton

*It is a story not just about Not-Nothing, but about Something. It is a story not just about the possibility of a world with meaning in it, but a story about a world where the meaning is, quite specifically, and utterly fully, love*



Tara Isabella Burton

It is a world that is predicated upon the love of a creator who has built a good world, and who—when sin afflicts it—comes into that world, in all his vulnerability, in all his mortality to save it.