

Julia Ecklar

"Threes"

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Deep into the stony hills
Miles from town or hold
A troop of guards comes riding
With a lady and her gold
She rides bemused among them
Shrouded in her cloak of fur
Companioned by a maiden
And a toothless sated cur

Three things see not end
A flower blighted ere it bloom
A message that miscarries
And a journey that is doomed

One among the guardsmen
Has a shifting restless eye
And as they ride he scans the hills
That rise against the skies
He wears both sword and jewels
Worth more than he could afford
And hidden in his baggage
Is a heavy secret horde

Of three things be wary of
A feather on a cat
The shepherd eating mutton
And the guardsman that is fat

Little does the lady care
What all the guardsmen know
That bandits ambush caravans
That on these trade roads go
In spite of tricks and clever traps
And all that men can do
The brigands seem to always sense
Which trains are false or true

Three things are most perilous
The shape that walks behind
The ice that will not hold you
And the spy you cannot find

From ambush bandits screaming
Charge the pack train and its prize
And all but four within the trade
Are taken by surprise
And all but four are cut down
As a woodsman fells a log
The guardsmen and the lady
And the maiden and the dog

Three things hold a secret
Lady riding in a dream
The dog that sounds no warning
And the maiden who does not scream

Then off the lady pulls her cloak
And armor she is clad
Her sword is out and ready and
Her eyes are fierce and glad
The maiden makes a gesture and
The dog's a cur no more
A wolf sword made and sorceress
Now face the bandit horde

Three things never anger
Or you will not live for long
A wolf with cubs
A man with power
And a women's sense of wrong

The lady and her sister
By a single trader lone
Were hired out to try to lay
A trap all of their own
And no one knew their plan except
The two who rode that day
For what you do not know
You cannot ever give away

Three things is it's better part
That only two should know
For treasure hides who shares your bed
And how to catch your foe

The bandits growl a challenge
And the lady only grins
The sorceress bows mockingly
And then the fight begins
When it ends there's only four
Left standing from the horde
The witch the wolf the trader

And the women with the sword

Three things never trust in
A maiden sworn is pure
The vows a kings has given
And the ambush that is sure

They strip the trader naked
And then whip him on his way
And to the barren hill sides like
The folk he used to slay
And what of all the maidens
That this bandit raped and slew
So as revenge the sorceress
Makes him a women too

Three things trust above all else
The horse on which you ride
The beast that guards your sleeping
And your shield mate at your side

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