A Morning Stroll to Derwentwater, through the Fields

Old gods of stone and light stand obdurate at Castlerigg; trees naked as penitents await the flare of canopies; stoic ewes with lambs at foot watch strangers with a wary eye; young rabbits play hide-and-seek among the sandstone tombs.

Derwentwater shimmers with the images of violet crests, the auburn bracken on their flanks, last year's heather dark as peat; a red hound bounds about our feet, eager to retrieve a stick. What did the Norsemen think, before their axes felled the trees? Did they wonder if the fly agaric was deceiving them, making them hallucinate this glimpse of paradise? I sense that I've been here before, and that I shall return. I take a sliver of green slate, leave a lucky coin.

_Jena Woodhouse_