Alphabet for the Muse, A-Z
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Underlined words and phrases are from Sylvia Plath’s 1949 Webster’s Dictionary, underlined in her hand and part of the Sylvia Plath Collection at Smith College. Italicized words represent the dictionary word itself, not always underlined when SP underlined definitions and other terminology associated with definitions.

for Karen V. Kukil

A is Astarte, Phoenician goddess of fertility and sexual love who could be cruel causing or fitted to cause pain or grief.
So you learned to conjure: summon a devil, spirit, legerdemain, to juggle ... or call on solemnly, by invocation, implore or beseech
4. Evoke...as if by magic, another order altogether, the asymmetry of lack.

B draws you, the words blaze, brocade and blanch the white luster of place, a home; the blight parents you.

C, a caryatid or captive, -- priestess in the temple of Diana at Caryae... supporting an entablature -- a casket kept hidden? Cerberus in his clairvoyance for discerning objects not present to the senses, understood your cryptic cosmos, Clotho, a cicatrix; the chronicle was cruel.

D was not daft, or Daedalus, cunning worker that he was in
more places than the Cretan labyrinth, he had a wilder surprise in store
to dazzle you; your downfall was to depend: 1. to hang down, 2. to be contingent.
...5. to trust the always dexterous, this would diminish your deism, the belief in a personal God.

E employs the pursuit of knowledge by observation and experiment; that is, embryo and emerge make for their own exile -- they explicate or exorcise an exact effort ...
... to wrest what cannot exalt itself.

F’s fate, your appointed lot.
3. Ultimate lot, underlined, like fathom several times, along with the definition: to penetrate and comprehend Clotho, with her gifted threads confused by your dress. It gave her a fever, excessive excitement when, unhappy with the hem unthreading, she added length, and you kept ripping it; not to expose flesh, but to be more familiar with the body -- to fathom a mystery in the increased heat, the fantasy.

G, strangely gothic in the pink line (the only colored ink) in the midst of continuous black pen marks -- that pink brings more attention to romantic as opposed to classical, a combination of sublime and grotesque even if gothic, like God, is left unmarked.

H is Hecate – but what are
the expectations inside
a third of the alphabet,
the hushed ‘h’ of horrific,
unmarked like the virgin goddess
unwilling to give up her independence;
the hazard would haunt
or hex her kingdom, moon-goddess
who loved the luminous in hallucinate,
the crackle of heckle, while in Holocaust
was the snared hare, hunted.

I is imagination, imbalance,
the I of idealized or poetic creation, the immaculate I.

J loves the gems of jargon,
the jeopardy somehow jerboa, those “Old World jumping rodents”
jettisoned; the real Jonah (3, someone who brings ill luck), the jailer.

K could be kind, a kiln for some favorites, banana bread
and apple cake, words scrawled on a December calendar date,
two months before the hardening, burning or drying.

L has lethargic limbs,
her forgetful ... Morbid drowsiness;
a state of inaction,
or indifference, lewd too.
As for Lethe,
an unchaste lethargy,
kept the lioness fighting.

M’s manna is mania,
a Mecca, in the maze of confusing
and baffling...paths;
the labyrinth, dizzy, but
no melodrama, no melancholy
or melancholic line is crossed
here, where the mechanics
of metaphysical metamorphosis
are underlined: martyr, matador.
metaphor.

N refused to be narrow, a nag, anything not nimble, alert. Even nihilism with its nymphomania in the nether world was treated with nonchalance, a simpleton ninnnyhammer compared to the real numen, Nemesis.

O, oracular and opulent, becomes ordained ore, the Ouija, opalescent oracle… any material containing valuable metallic constituents for the sake of which it is minded and worked, what orgy this revelry in the medium that brought an alphabet...signs, a planchette, mediumistic messages, also, opposition.

P, god of flocks and pastures patron of shepherds, hunters, Pan, and for you, panic which meant paralysis, a particular pastoral of incongruous unrelated scraps, the patchwork and paradox of the perilous and perseverance.

Q is a queen; she has no qualm, or misgiving with her quill. The quagmire is a quixotic unpractical question -- What will quicken and quench this quietism?

Always rapt, R grows rapacious as the alphabet, rare – transported, wholly absorbed – lets you forget the rat in its midst, that contemptible deserter, the excessively grasping voracious one.
S is *sorcery*, power gained from the assistance or control of evil spirits, though not sorrowful; the *swarm*. 1. A great number of honeybees emigrating from a hive in company with a queen to start a new colony elsewhere is *sweet*. 3. Dear; beloved.

The *tabula rasa* of T, has a tinge as with disease; something odious though not taboo, the *taint* might be a *totem* to a specific family esp., any animal or plant species.. A symbol of representation of the totemic being.

U. *unkempt, unruly, unsparing.*
Not merciful or forgiving, *Untrue*; Not faithful; disloyal it cannot *unman* anything turbulent; ungovernable.

V’s *vein* follows *veil* (syn. See Empty, void) what lies there -- a fissure? a crevice, a strain, *Venus* ?..Protectress of gardens...
a very beautiful woman of *venomous virtue* the *vein* of blood back to the heart?

W, as in to lay *waste*, to devastate, will also *emancipate*: this *warrant* tells you to *keep watch over*, *ward*, as in the *warden* you fend off.

X
The only X, *x-ray*.

Y’s *yarn* was long, “the lyf so short” in your beloved Chaucer’s words -- and “the craft so long to lerne.”
Z, the zodiac’s completion, is the zealous muse in the zero hour, that zeal.