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Sommario/riassunto	In Bêtes Noires , Lauren Derby explores storytelling traditions among the people of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, focusing on shape-shifting spirit demons called baka/bacá . Drawing on interviews with and life stories of residents in a central Haitian-Dominican frontier town, Derby contends that bacás—hot spirits from the sorcery side of vodou/vodú that present as animals and generate wealth for their owners—are a manifestation of what Dominicans call fukú de Colón , the curse of Columbus. The dogs, pigs, cattle, and horses that Columbus brought with him are the only types of animals that bacás become. As instruments of Indigenous dispossession, these animals and their spirit demons convey a history of trauma and racialization in Dominican popular culture. In the context of slavery and beyond, bacás keep alive the promise of freedom, since shape-shifting has long enabled fugitivity. As Derby demonstrates, bacás represent a complex history of race, religion, repression, and resistance.