Crocus

I am Spring's Amethyst crocus Voice for the voiceless I speak with multiple Tongues at once.

An alchemist/ warrior Goddess in One— My mouth bleeds from unstitching children's lips sewn shut,

unleashing memories of bruises broken limbs slobbering kisses swollen/ infected genitalia, neglect

Souls deeply scarred/ Wounds only seen when eyes shut.

When everyone sleeps, I hear children's cries and hurt children trapped inside adult bodies desperately needing to weep lost years.

Following directions as a conduit of Spirit and Light I release their screams into the night.

I open

my mouth.

I refuse silence. I break their silence.

No man can ever tell me *Sssh...ssshh....* Again!

I open the drapes— I rise. I levitate/ I glide in the air of a chemtrailed sky where helicopters and drones swarm over my head.

Womxn warriors remind me all womxn and children must be safe regardless of skin tone, class, and creed. I protect, while

Water canyons try to disperse Prayers. I duck from tear gas and rubber bullets. I smash cycles of abuse.

I wave flares over bridges across intersections throughout long marches

Proclaiming Our Bodies Our Health Our Lives Matter.

With pen to paper, I redefine justice/ I refuse to exist or die by fear. And through Speaking, I face myself as we face each other and together

we heal.

Lupine

Frizzy black curls twist and swirl a wide halo from tangled knots in the Deep South/ They rise up in a magenta spiral on malachite stems tapering off at the tips/ with enough heat and pressure, stubborn mountains become scarred valleys/ Thin tributaries lead to clandestine basins/ Veins meander like railroad tracks built by old Black hands.

Your Ancestors conjured You

through their howling laments, keloid backs, and bloody-stained rags they slept, ate, and picked cotton in. Mahogany skin/ Burnt sienna rooted in plantations built on Red soil.

But you/ a breathing meadow of Lupine radiating boundless Light/ interweave warriors' blood, oppressed blood with colonizers' carrying- the-whip blood, who manipulated the Bible, got off at night when their chattel would holler, as the bodies they bought and sold laid limp while their cum leaked on the right side of Black legs. Enslaved. Swollen tongues/ Swollen clits.

Trauma lives in your body in your blood. You see even when tumid Eyes clamp shut. Enough is Enough!

Seethe with tears. Scream. Cry. Growl. Shake your body. Stretch your spine. Dangle your arms while you sway your hips. Raise your left fist while You trudge the Red Road. March with the People.

Remember— Only you can remedy Your own body and soul. Your blood contains Elders, abusers, victims, survivors in one.

Let Spirit lead. Heal Now!

Demand— Protect the Water. Protect the Land. Protect *All* Womxn and Children.

Lilacs

Take your filthy hands off me.

I SAID – Take your scarred wounded hands of me. Your weight has no power over my wobbly toddler knees.

Your old construction hands, callused with generations of incest, beatings, and children screaming, pulverized my amethyst flowers. How could YOU?

I remember

choking on the size of your retired labor-union tongue when my gums were getting ready to release their first set of baby teeth.

I remember

you stretching my legs after kindergarten graduation. I stopped liking school then. My tights dirty/ A rite of passage to the first grade.

I remember

you spreading my legs at night when Grandma went to take a long bath. Your oldest son pulled the same move when my mother left the room two years later. His gallant badge blazed from extinguishing fires.

But this firefighter used his hands to burn the lips between my scared little thighs. I remember/ I survived.

And I am here! A field of lilacs, Who runs with the Four Directions. You know the Great Spirit oversees this Field. How could YOU? I clear My throat each time I taste your mucoid saliva.

I lose

My appetite when I feel your fingers circling My soft areolas.

I smudge My body with sage, sweetgrass, and rose petals, transmuting your residual sweat into tears leading Me to the Ocean.

I scream into waves,

Yemaya holds Me. The shoreline's salty foam releases My Prayers.

Diving deep,

soaring high, I unwind on the spine of a humpback whale. Her oscillating muffled words travel miles. Her cryptic tones swirl violet within My aura. I recite—

You have no power over ME.

You have NO POWER over me.

YOU

HAVE NO POWER OVER ME.

When dawn breaks I RISE in the direction of the East. I pick up shovel and seeds. I sow. I weep. I sow. I weep. For many moons, I renew an ethereal field of lilacs. Swallowtail butterflies rest on petals pulsating purpureal shades of violet. Leaves dance while oak trees wave their arms in celebration. At last, I return where I first saw her, where I first see me as a little girl; and where I tell her—

I love you. I've always loved you. I never left you. I never will leave you. She roams in this field. She rests in power.

Phoenix

Behind iron oxidized bars behind steel stainless shackles smeared with blood, My Warrior Queen / Phoenix gets ready to burn from the ashes soar high above a man-made cell breaking toxic bonds for this ain't no symbiotic relationship between a host cell and her bacteria, this is a struggle. A daily struggle / where oppression defines "Black" and a forced exile, lost connection to her homeland, is a mere storyline told by the flare of a match set off by bullets to her skin. She pats her Afro into a halo, rolling up her sleeves, she sees no one mirrored in a metallic reflection, only herself, this cell, internalized existing within and produced from what's out. Haywire and cold, people operate by what grips their lungs and palpitates their hearts----iron bars----these fingers no longer comb my Queen's hair. Each follicle is a soul marching to the frontline. They ignite into a crimson funeral pyre-Burning the hands of narcotic dealers Burning the ammunition of what institutionally kills us Burning the doors to receive medicine from our healers Burning to exhaust ourselves and chant: Black and Breathing. Black and Breathing. Black And Breathing.

Hydrangeas

Your father left me for dead with soiled pampers and a scorching Lavender Blue larynx on his 1960s Green carpet. I laid there limp in the living room, tears destined to preserve me, I cried for you; I screamed *Mommy* until I passed out. Yearning Your presence cradled me until I was 9.

Then at 12, I spoke through an eroding esophagus, a belly on fire from secrets, a compressed throat, a murmurous heart— I told you what happened.

Silence

befell You.

You did what you could only do as the frightened, helpless abused little girl you are

trapped inside an inflated body of comforting blubber and dark sagging skin. You were so scared.

> Your lips shivered/

You froze for the next Io years.

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But you have such a loquacious tongue when avoiding grief. You tested my unwavering love with muteness. You ripped me out, pulled me up, I was once a dutiful daughter.

Now, I am merely a bouquet of Hydrangeas Slowly languishing in the Autumn wind stranded, without water.

But still, I love you. Even after you continued to devour a pyramid of marshmallow coated roasted yams, mash potatoes, cranberries, seasoned stuffing, and slices of baked turkey when seated sandwiched between me and him.

Following the family's Thanksgiving prayer, bite after bite, I lost appetite I began to purge.

Your taciturnity devalued me. Your swollen tongue nearly broke my dignity.

But still, I love you.

You tried to protect me— A woman shielding her daughter from catcalls and whistles. A woman cursing grown men on street corners for staring too long, yearning to comb her daughter's 12-year-old curves.

But woman, Your silence made you a bystander after I said your father molested me.

I must help you,

never stop loving you.

You easily feel unheard, you hyperventilate. Your lungs tighten Your voice drops.

You talk in circles. I remind you to breathe.

And although I wish I could wrest Your karma,

I can't.

Your hair thins in loneliness and your blood clots in worries.

I see you. I forgive you.

I hold my Truth regardless if you hold mine too.