

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...sssh...*
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.

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

10 years.

[

]

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.