

(Untitled)

Are bees such bad things
Stingers but honey too.
The North would tell you
Winter's not so new.
But what is snow
A few degrees
below Mason-
Dixon.
Can't weeds
Be flowers,
Proof of life
Going on?

Song of My Sister

I

On fourteen days past of four months past Nineteen Sixty-Four¹
Four hours passed. The dark dawn midnight struck
And fell our Winter of volcanic Demise decay.
About the land, ran the frenzied fire amok.

The pretty Djohariah² all bundled in her white coat
Threw her head to the dim blood moon.
All white swirling 'round her in some snowy haze
Her color of lily fur
Easily besting the whirl
Of so grayly bleak.

She closed her pretty eyes.
Her heavy eyes.
Slowly drew air
And with one bay came our Burden from her chest,
Like the pain in a widowed pianist.
With one sad howl,
She cried to the Unnamed.
With her pretty heart afoul, blackened,

¹ *Silent Spring*'s author, Rachel Carson passed on this date.

² Musician Sufjan Steven's sister, about whom he devoted a seventeen-minute song to in his album *All Delighted People*, calling it a "single mother's jam." The lyrics suggest that Djohariah was a victim of domestic violence and abandonment: "And the man who left you for dead / He's the heart grabber, back stabber / Double cheater, wife beater."

Song of My Sister & Others

She, the still beating untamed soul undomesticated
Sung her throe of the Black plagued diseased air.
Sung of the one weedy species³ deafly astray.
Sung of the gold coffer that killed her bound Mother,

Staked. Rope biting cut flesh to the bleak bone.
Stained, discolored dark with a smoke-wrought famine—
Covered with the obscure, the black shroud of un-woken terror—
Not staved—no—but left bare by ripping hungry tares.

Spring's lips were so parched,
Its flumes waiting for winter's flame wither.
Its pretty little nose longing to feel
March's color tickle of the succulent flower
Ears all ready for the honeybee silent melody⁴.

But still a forgotten bear, tucked away in the mountain cave
Lying in our Unaware, in its frozen slumber,
Dreaming of golden breeze and the spring beach pier.
Much alike, He, the Amur leopard besieged
Huddles in a small Seventy⁵
Making its unheard footsteps that are lost quickly
For in our blind blizzard shroud, much goes Unseen.

The Mindless Shiny Axe
Whetted by modern-man's stone.
The electric summers and
The Forgotten wildfire raging,
Forgotten!

We,
heedless to the snaking flames that ensnare.
Oblivious to this golden age's King George's Sound Company⁶
Us the callous chorus courting the menace,

³ “One weedy species” is the term Elizabeth Kolbert, a professor at William College, uses for *Homo sapiens* in her Pulitzer Prize winning *The Sixth Extinction: An Unusual History*.

⁴ An allusion to the still unexplained Colony Collapse Disorder and the otherwise decline in bee population (about 50%). Dually, an analogy to the disappearance of the birds in *Silent Spring*.

⁵ The World Wildlife Fund, a global conservation organization, estimates that only seventy of these magnificent leopards remain in the world, calling them “the rarest and most endangered big cat in the world.”

⁶ An English company founded in 1785 in London to trade for furs on the Northwest Coast.

imbibing
like rusting Roman royalty.
We the ugly slug,
the undead dead virus
The unanimated, decaying death fungus
Leaving blackened scars and earthen host in mangled husk.
On Her naked barren body, our pernicious paved slime,
Our lightless lights and starless dusks.

The demon blaze looking over the land with a sad gaze
Grimace raising the Red Wolf⁷ cry
The sad smoke weeping for the fettered,
The forgotten Darwin's fox's whelp going unheard
Hushed by the big city factory hum!

II

(Djohariah!)
O Mother could you forgive us!
We killed your true inheritors—
Those sacrilegious savages!—
Those who whispered with the wind
Those who loved the mountains dearly and the land—
Low foothills to the mounts of remedy
Appalachia to Yosemite—
Every tree Yours, lumber for borrow,
A great privilege, A sacred Respect.
A jocund ground green not lustrous yellow.

O mother we forsook you,
Blood we stole,
Blood we spilled,
Of yours. Of our own.
Like the dark wine all over Saint Antoine
We murdered with Progress,
Our the torches in hand
The enlightened inheritors with the light,
Our facile disguise!

Those who followed the Red Wolf
And all your children

⁷ Almost lost to extinction, captive breeding efforts have revived the red wolf population to around fifty reports Defenders of Wildlife. Known as *wa'ya* in Cherokee mythology it was an important feature of the Native American tribe. Thus, Cherokees typically avoided killing them, fearful of avenging pack-mates.

Who would dare hurt you,
Who would dare raise their voice.
The cries of mothers and fathers,
Like the stressed violin strung un-tuned
The cries of the sons and the daughters,
The generations of the imprisoned unborn.
The reckoned planets of umpteen universes.
The mass massacre left unreproached.
The Family murder of first degree.

O bereaved mother, the capital crime.
The pain of millions of millions souls
We swallowed whole from your before abound kingdom
We sucked your rivers dry to the marrows.
Our fingers still blood-Red screaming from the harrowing, the horrible crimes, we
grabbed your skull
and
Gouged your eyes.

III

Your beautiful eyes you use to paint in wondrous water color and the skies leapt in joy
And
The farmers danced in their fields of your flora's boon
The Gardens they laughed,
They held the cloud hands
And smiled at us, carousing to the happy banjo plucks and swaying to the soulful wolf
howl,
We sat under your tingling strings and your deep Blue Sea Sonorous Sounds and Rosy
Red regalia, your Amber-wheat sway vibration and
Dahlia mountain touch.

Fall fell her first fair faint drop on summer
We busied the roads in droves
Like the bees wanting the taste
The all enchanted liquors of color,
O to hear the rich lily heathered feathering, to see the
Love Spun Swan
Dancing in the Caroline midline pines,
Singing her dreamy melancholy (for the lonely).
Her honeyed fury (for the frenzied).
And her ebullient tranquility (for the impatient).

IV

Give us the time to fight the fire, Eumenides.

We will make heard the lost sounds,
The forgotten footsteps in our volcanic winter snow remembered,
And we will raise You,
We will make all the wilderness Yours
All the world full once more
Once more
The Glorious Wondrous
The Victorious Sonorous

You the Mother of all our pretty broken hearts
We'll build Your shrine,
A World's Eighth Wonder lighthouse in the Wild,
Beacon of the uncontained.
We who thought we will know so much
Know as much as the new-born.
Teach us again, we the warm Little
Bathed in all Summer's potential
Free us from the withering prisons we thought freedom was
And see the seas
Pleasing breeze fantasies
Winding through your wind chimes,
Running through all the land.

Rise, Anthem of my Summer brethren
Run, my Autumn sister.
Rally the River Runner,
Childlike lover of the Spring Angel
And

From our frozen-shocked flumes, Crash
Singing for Carson's birds, and
The quiet Amur in Russia, and
The wolves of Appalachia.
Sing
Of your father bears,
Of your brothers in the tribal pack.
Of Your humming true Mother

Singing the Hymn
Of Djohariah
Against the
Dim Wintered Dam.

Sunless Dawn

In the morning dew,

She tried to find her voice.
The humming-bird angel
Who sung and buzzed and flew
Who we shot and strung and slew

In the black loud afternoon,
The still-warm body the dog found
The writhing creature eyes wide with pain
encaged in course canine.
What a glorious job the men did say,
Petting the well-behaved, dark-eyed hound.
When the sun died down
The men watched the horizon catch fire,
they wrung the already
Dead
Child's neck.

Merciless in a siren's fury when the man drew his drink;
All-pale like a ghost,
All the air and his soul,
Like a loved one being stolen,
All the world in a dark swirl of Alone
Coarse and cold like a river pebble stone.
He felt his poor, writhing heart being grabbed by death's Debt
As his foot got caught,
He thrashed all about
caught in the jagged river's jaw.

The black-red blood flood
Spilled over the rocks.
The serpentine water,
Like a leaden anchor
With entangling chains,
Like a sinful adder
Constricting like dark veins,
wrapped 'round his neck.

The men on the bank
Panicked and whirled.
Tried a branch as he sank.
But the suffocated swallowed stole soul's fate
Was the bird's.
