

8. Bleeding Song

Scott White: contrabass

Valentin Gregor: viola

To be where there is no longing, but of belonging to myself
To know that I cannot care for you without first caring for myself
When I think of how long I've been broken and shamed
Of my strength, only the memory remains: a seed that awaits the rains

You, who are so afraid to break the silence that keeps you tied
You, who resent the few who try to live beyond the lies
When I think of how long you've been broken and shamed
Of your strength, does even the memory remain: a seed that awaits the rains

Bleed, let the blood-red sun pour down, let our bodies paint the ground with life
Laugh from the belly of the earth, her body gave us birth: we give her thanks
When I think of how long we've been broken and shamed
Of our strength, only the memory remains: a seed that awaits the rains

Silent, in the morning light women gather in to speak
To sing, to dance, touch soul to soul, create our own release
When we know of how long we've been broken and shamed
Of our strength, though only the seed remains, our tears will fall like rain

Solace after pain, sunshine after rain, our strength will rise again
And we'll be where there is no longing: we'll be past belonging to ourselves



As women, we fight against being silenced. When the oppressive force is external (threat of violence, social inequality), the injustice is easily identifiable, but when the oppression comes from within, it is more insidious. I believe that foremost among the attitudes that generate our internal oppression is the unspoken conditioning that to be a woman, one must be nice: anger is unattractive, unfeminine.

But, as Susan Rosenthal so brilliantly tells us, “Anger is the emotion of injustice. Anger is an instinctive, automatic, and necessary response to unfairness. Anger alerts us that something is wrong and supplies the energy to make it right.... Anger does not need to be managed. Anger is not the problem. The injustice that provokes it is the problem.”

<https://susanrosenthal.com/oppression/psychology-psychiatry/anger-is-the-emotion-of-injustice/>

The ancients often personified justice as a woman – for example, Maat was the Egyptian goddess of justice, harmony, and the regulation of the stars – and I believe that women may, in fact, embody justice more naturally than men: for women instinctively want to treat their children fairly.

This song follows the process of a woman in freeing herself from oppression – first by acknowledging the oppression, then by accessing her anger, then by unmasking the injustice. It is only by doing this that she can truly own herself, and then, with time – strong in her relationship with herself – look past herself to connect with, and transform, the outside world.

