Appeals upon the knee of the absent father as if we could capture him with our attentiveness

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Narrator **Chorus** **Woman One** **Woman Two**

Welcome. Beginning is always difficult, a delicate problem. I'll begin by speaking of the time I went to a gallery with a friend. We were immediately drawn to the art on exhibit and because one of us knew her we talked of the work and of the woman who had made it.
A young woman.
A woman younger than I.
My initial attaction to the work was immediately followed by a response of resistance. As if I needed protection from what this woman was saying. Or to be more truthful, protection against her ability to speak. Her art was good and this sparked competitive fear in me. A small, sharp charge of anxiety blocked my perception with the thought that this woman could speak so well, so early in life. I began to reassure my weakness with excuses. The market will distill and corrupt her. She's aready selling too quickly. And this gesture's contrived, that image trite....

But then some merciful impulse of grace allows me to feel and listen. To give this artist her moment, and I calm. It is as if the air shifts, becomes lighter. I remember I am born of a culture with one voice of woman for one hundred of men. I remember the misconception that if one woman speaks her voice will be thought of as exceptional, causing a silence of others; that any difference among us is a cause for insecurity because beautiful, infinite variety is a frightening visage in this culture, especially the infinite variety of women.

SUCH NARROW PASSAGES

With this recollection, I look again at the young woman's work and I am fed by it. My desire to speak too returns and is increased by her contribution. Odd. When I can turn the resistance to reception it gives me so much vigor. So I say, the more voices giving light in our silent darkness of culture the better. As many voices as can muster the strength to speak, to form a language. The we working together.

SPEAK ON YOUNG SISTERS
THIS IS ART'S FERTILE VAUDEVILLE

(pause)

Back before the mother before the
mother before
the unremembered way was offered
the by now
unremembered way of being
was inclusive exchange.
Difference from without not embraced
but because fascinating
watched
mimicked
absorbed.

Cycles abundant broken open.
What was known was passed.
Spread openhanded. Greetings.

IT HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN AS IT IS NOW
IT HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN SO

A showing
a telling this is how we light our fires
sharpen our points
cradle our warmth to blood

and perhaps
this is how we speak to our gods.

Man One **Man Two** **Woman Three**

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
		Back before the mother before the mother before it was a roaming roaming. One part animal one part human some one part of a divine.	
		The creatures the soil we walked no man's land...	
	NO ACCUMULATED CAPITAL		
		...our bent for survival our upright head.	
		Yes much unknown and left unknowable Much predation and early, unreasonable death.	
		But the mountains no she no he just simple, grandiose and open creation that gave and took away bestowed with grace or withdrawn in famine. All unforeseen and unforeseeable marked by the turning the inevitable turning of night and day.	
	OUR SWELLING MOTHERFLOOD A SYMPATHETIC SYSTEM A SHELTER FOR THE INEXPRESSIBLE MIRACLE.		
			Was it ever so? (from the darkness)
		We the entrance the channel for life we encouraged the flocks' fire. We the parallel spirit and pathway for the human flow flowing as fields of grain their spirits blew through our being's gate.	
	BIRTH BIRTHING THE WORLD WHAT IS THIS MOTHERHOOD?		
			They will never be as protected as they were within my body...
		You must sever the blood to give them life and take back your own. And still all the while you push them out they keep the want to crawl back in...	
	BREATHE BREATHE THE FLEETING SWEETNESS		
		This giving of life over to others This raising this tending this fanning the fire and then release. Their separation our dissolution...	
			...as my I ebbs away into you...
		We are an ancient and growing force.	

Man One

Nonsense.
It is not now nor was it ever so.
It will never be so.

(Silence. Darkness. Pause)

Silence.
(Pause. Darkness.)

Man Two

Woman Three

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
	...WITHIN....		
		A time after then *after the mother before* *the mother before* *a fear of descended. Won out.* *Caused closure.*	
			...blackest blackness blackmail *I think this secret motherhood...*
		Theonceonetribefamily *vast and fertile split* *into races, kinships* *isolated units of belief.*	
		East parted from west *rivers flowing down* *each the other side of a great divide* *speech now one unknown to the other* *as the continents* *grasped their secrets jealously* *and the world was named:*	
	FOREIGNER. TERRITORY. POSSESSION. WIFE.		
		Each woman routed her current *through just one man* *each man through other men* *and men* *lost into their brotherhoods of work,* *weaponry and money* *routed through their symbols* *strength's substitutes...*	
	REPRESENTATION		
		Each his dominion's dominance divided *and suppressed.* *Yes, a more efficient system.* *Yes* *the world released her tortured secrets*	
	THE MOON A LUMP OF ROCK		
		But all and every nod at acquisition *haunted us further* *into the body of the beast.....*	
		Conspiracy with death we did not know *— evil comes up from under.*	

Man One

What is this foolish, random noise?
I razed mountains
drained raging rivers
cut down the obscuring
and formless forests.
Foe of the darkness
I brought light to the night
order to the chaos
and nature to her knees
her bloody knees.

Fear and famine
I stamped them out stamped them out
built my empires formed my language
challenged and matched the force
of the mighty sun himself.

A divine and some say evil destiny
my ally destruction
but I brought us here.
My story told is everyman's story.
And now we will walk upright forever.
Forget your mothers.

Man Two

He bottled her and made my fortune.

Tamed the damn wicked beast...

Forget your mothers.
(Darkness. Silence)

Woman Three

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
			You ought to have wept for me then father *when I was as an object* *for then it was as though I were dead...*
		And now? ***There are no more unexplored*** ***safarilands.*** ***This fertile crescent earth falls back*** ***exhausted from our sucking*** ***she used and abused*** ***we look to desert abandon*** ***and forget the mother.***	
			...as my life releases into the children...
GO DOWN TO THE DEEPEST WELL **A SYMPATHETIC SYSTEM**			
		And the men? ***They make an abstraction*** ***a symbol of the heart*** ***so they can fight kill*** ***run their blind emotions through.*** ***Protect it*** ***anything but realize it,*** ***feel it next to,*** ***inside them*** ***beating with the breath*** ***of their only begotten son and his loss...***	
NO ACCUMULATED CAPITAL			
			...you ought to have wept for me *when I was as an object...*
OH WHERE HAS THE LITTLE GIRL GONE?			
			...for then it was as though I were dead.

Man One

Man Two

Woman Three

Capital and work the father
he keeps her tied to him
denying any severance
of blood with the daughter.

...and yet I can not forget the way he drove me...

Quiet. **Quiet.**

Quiet. **Quite quiet.**
Allright.
Because you demand it. A revision:

I built those empires.
You've all heard of my glories
my stories of me.
My exploits told over&over by word
men alright I'll say in my pay.
More to truth as best can be retold
we followed at first the migrating herds.
It was a roaming roaming
some territory covered as one season
the summer hillside
the next the winter valley.

Then we understood.
The meat traced a course.
It would return.

Cycles abundant broken open.
A scientific triumph.

We settled on the route. Broke ground.
Staked claim. Civilized.
Ours damn it ours.
The gods of heroes gave it to us.
They summoned to our killing
the multitudes of animals come mute
and stupid back to slaughter.

We who believed in order
but confronted chaos
We bought we thought
an unrestful peace

We who believed in order
but confronted chaos
We bought we thought
an unrestful peace

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
	BROTHERHATE		
	BROTHERHATE		
A WINTER DARK A DOUBLE CROSS A CONFUSED CONTRADICTION		***The division of the world this from that from this our greatest sin...***	
		...unhappiness a poison flows one human to another. Each life taken an irrevocable fate.	
	REVENGE. REVENGE	***Violence breeds only & only more violence cast into a familyless void***	
WHAT'S GOT TO BE PUT IN A MAN TO CAUSE HIM TO KILL ANOTHER?			
	REFUSE WE REFUSE TO BE EXCUSE ANY LONGER	***REFUSE. WE REFUSE TO BE EXCUSE ANY LONGER.***	*REFUSE. WE REFUSE TO BE EXCUSE ANY LONGER.*
			...Nightmares dead daughters peppered with blood pushed out without a home.... WE REFUSE WE WILL NO LONGER BE FORSAKEN.
	WE REFUSE WE WILL NO LONGER BE FORSAKEN	***WE REFUSE WE WILL NO LONGER BE FORSAKEN.***	

Man One

Yes, because our gods demanded it.
Yes, salvation.

Hell. You stand alone
in a dangerous world.
Foreign predators, saboteurs
enemies everywhere
an invading invasion of others
threatening to stake a claim more righteous
with a more potent god. Huh.

But from each small seed of victory
a new foe bloomed
stronger it seemed.
Better tooled.

Hush hush boy. Remember.
You bear my name.
You want to know my secrets?
Want to know how to forget death?
All that rages with life
All that tugs against the constant
restraints
overflows with that wildhorse ambition
desire & passion
living in the early, fantastic parts of us...
...All that pulses with love
corral, shave & sacrifice.
And if it persists
deny and turn your profit on it.
And all else failing
ignore, imprison or neuter.

But I've only begun to speak.
To tell my tale...

Man Two

We butchered and ravaged and turned to dust
across a vast cycle of centuries

That delusion control.

Our history of war encoded as peace
    but now in truth
    he/we I awake
    each joint & muscle aches with age...
Perhaps between cruxifiction & resurrection
there is no eternity.
But chance for change?

Women's faces cover with veils

Woman Three

WE REFUSE
WE WILL NO LONGER BE FORSAKEN

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
		Precisely. ***You wonder you talk with one another and wonder...***	
	(chorus one) **WHERE'S OUR PURITY GONE?** **THAT TREASURED AND TOUTED** **SPONTANEOUS CREATION** **THAT WAS OUR YOUTH** (chorus two) **YOUR POETS LINGER** **THEY ARE STILTED AND CLICHED...** (chorus three) **YOUR LEGACY A MURDEROUS** **UGLY NIGHT** **DEVIATED AND SICK** **HAVING ASSASSINATED** **OR SUCKED DRY ALL THOSE** **ONCE MANY AMONG YOU** **BESTOWED WITH GRACE.** (All Chorus) **WHO'S LEFT TO SPEAK DIRECTLY?**		
		What you call glory ***I call bloody disgusting spectacle*** ***filling all silence*** ***that might be generative*** ***with noise.*** ***Self stroking noise.***	
	WHEN WILL THE OLD BOYS **BECOME MEN?** (Pause. A song.)		
			Why do you scorn us? *We who have given warmth* *tender wound our arms* *around your dying bodies.* *We the vessels who have stored your pain?*
	EACH BIRTH MATES A DEATH BROTHERS		
		We lie here at the core of your hate ***because we mirror back*** ***the truth of your tales*** ***because we wear your lies*** ***upon our bodies transformed.*** ***We lie a strain a striked vein*** ***of hard jeweled fear*** ***running beneath all oppression*** ***across all hate*** ***of class and caste and color.*** ***You bind us.*** ***Restrict us.*** ***Hope to hold us forever*** ***because in your fear of our loss*** ***you see your own.***	
	FACE US **AND FACE YOUR MOST PAINFUL TRUTH**		
			Amputated. *Crippled and stripped of our anger.* *Neutered unable to act.* *Denied lied and mummified* *all the while blood beats through our veins....*
	WE ARE YOUR DARK AFRICA		
		Prehistoric walkways yet unnamed ***Elusive territory escaping*** ***remaining unknown*** ***we are your dark africa.***	

Man One **Man Two** **Woman Three**

But my glories.
Look at my vast glories...

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
		A shadowmass ***weeping witness*** ***to your endless victories*** ***one over another*** ***witness to disgrace*** ***and self serving theologies*** ***saying no thing.*** ***Mute but lovely*** ***lower forms of human*** ***& all the while you*** ***shaking your 4 horsemen at us*** ***as if you were different*** ***as if you stood back observing*** ***detached making your declarations.*** ***Bring it home***	
			The place of return .
	(chorus one) **WE ADMIRED YOU** (chorus two **WE READ AND STUDIED YOU** (chorus three) **WE SLEPT WITH YOU** **AND BORE YOUR BLOOD** (all chorus) **AND YET YOU COULD NOT SEE US**		
		We are your dark africa. ***Our history as silent as the grave.*** ***Our passion refused permission to be.***	
			Our breath of life brings you too close to death. *You simply can't bear* *this barest telegraphic truth:* *Each birth mates a death.*
		Each birth mates a death.	
		We are your Dark Africa. ***Your shadow of a doubt.*** ***Unrepresented. Troubling.*** ***Excluded from your talk.*** ***A fertile and muzzled vaudeville.***	
A woman came to visit. She spoke of having recently witnessed the birth of a friend's baby. She had two memories from the experience. The first that of being in the presence of a miracle, the erruption of life, and the second of a great burden being lifted from her soul. The burden of death. For she had seen death even and precisely in the birth of life. Death as a part of, as a friend to birth and birth as an equal with death.			
			The babies. They hold your heart forever.
Ever since this experience she said she has felt much less fear of death. She has understood the sense of it. The spirit settles or it flees.		***Oh! what a beautiful meadow.***	
	VOLCANO TORRENT OUTBURST		

Man One

Blaze of light in my soul's night
I could not keep the heat
from rising
above that cold feared ground.

Where in truth oft stands
an isolated man
horribly pained asking why? Why?

Man Two

What is it to return from the dead?
What will it take to pull this weight of hate
    from our collective shoulder?
Who issues the command
    a young man must beat his father
our society's sorry metaphor.
Always fearing
    yet willing an unseen army of authority...

Even as he drives those who would be close
away....

Woman Three

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
		...the real tragedy...	
PUFFED CHEST OF THE HAWK			
I am sitting with the man who is the father of my child. Our son is asleep and for a moment the tumultuous, everday issues that besiege and often trouble our bond abate. We are at rest. I am able to feel an open and great current of love for this man my companion whom fate has brought so close that our blood's mix, our lives run parallel. My fondness spreads thinking of the warm lucky gift of fate permitting us to become familial, to realize one another's being...			
THIS LIFE THIS ONE PRECIOUS LIFE			
And then another, related emotion surrounds my warmth. It is my fear of his loss. It is as if the tender love in itself recalls our mortality, reminds me that even this routine bond burdened with the details of survival will not go on forever. This too will pass. Will suffer death. I remember that I have felt before this most bitter sweet knowledge of separation that comes coupled with a great feeling of love. It is almost too much for me to bear both comprehensions simultaneously; allowing the joy of the full tender preciousness of the bond while recognizing its inevitable dissolution.			
			You must sever the blood to take back your own.
		Still hungry for life everlasting we wait our passing over when all others who love must release must remain behind and let us go.	
ANOTHER CRACK IN THE BROKEN HEART			
		Ah, at last the heavens open the heart speaks.	
AND STILL WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT IN THE WORLD IS A MAN ANYWAY?			

Man One

Just to make em strong..

What is this? Repentance?
My sins will they now be laid out
all in minute, agonizing detail?
Womanpoisoned
obsessed with confession
will my sons now drive one another to
the end of their talk their tales of horror.
Whose experience the most brutal?
Whose picture the most explicit
depiction of men's beastliness?

Man Two

...some twisted voice has whispered in his ear.
Old man's tales.
In fact it makes us weak with need for touch
and in time
deaf in the heart...

Oh lord. Am I a stunted man?
Unable to speak to know?
All role no me?

Mother, how could you abandon me?

Oh mother do we know what we do
substituting the thick bond of power
for the transparent relation of love?
Your lovelove
pinned to our mortal chests
destructs and decays leaving no scar
no trace of accomplishment
no path to find our way back home.
Where's my win and loss my record my reward?

...even by the inquisitors' tally
the earth is drenched to her core with our blood.
How can we now forgive or be forgiven?

Woman Three

Narrator **Chorus** **Woman One** **Woman Two**

DISTURBING BURIALGROUNDS

Between us it is
a with without
a here not here
an unrestful peace estranged & in the balance.

The good and simple heart is it enough?

BUT DARE NOT FEEL

YOUR OLD MANKIND REMEMBERED

A friend who has a 3 year old child is pregnant again. Both she and her husband are artists. I told her that I was incredulous upon hearing of this second pregnancy because it seemed her work and body had only now begun to recover from the submersion of the first child. She responded that the prospect of being consumed by the birth and raising of a second baby was less frightening to her than the attempt to re-establish herself as an artist after her absence.

Big tree sparrow occupied sparks
simultaneous thought of my young son.
He and the sparrowtree are of one
piece of being.

Why are procreation of the species and creation of culture defined in such opposition in our world? Why can't one deepen and inform the other? Are we so willing to let a woman artist who births children slip away into the anonymous abyss of this culture's motherhood?

SWEET INFINITY
SWEET CONNECTEDNESS OF LIFE

When I thought back over this conversation I came to understand her choice for children. The demand for your substance that constitutes the child's open, declared need is a clear voice contrasted with the qualified, limited response to women's art.

Man One

You reach past truce now boy.

But you need a god. You need a God.

Man Two

But this is my truth
    some ironhorse yesterday
the weight of the burden the empty dream today.
Is struggle how the soul grows?

Between us it is
a with without
a here not here
an unrestful peace estranged & in the balance.
Our house not put in order
    we make our way blind
through narrow passages unfriendly or unknown.
The good and simple heart is it enough?

Joseph
The very last tusk of ivory
has been brought out
    from your heart of darkness.
In fact
although it bestowed great white wealth
    and many many tales
the darkness itself has been beaten back
abused
and flooded with artificial light.
Shorn of all respect we think we have looted
    its power over us.
    This lie perhaps the most dark.
And with eachlie
    the smell of death the darkness grows
driven now so deep denied and glorified
we can not distinquish it from the horror
                we pretend...
Pity. We never understood your meaning.
The darkness is within and not entirely the enemy
    and not entirely any man's to pillage.

We have only our sterile culture to remind us...
        We must push forward to get back.

Woman Three

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
I understood again that our artworld is still by and large a men's platform and it speaks of confusing negation and competition while the body of the child is clear and simple in its need. While the body of the child is no representation. It is life itself.			
	IT IS LIFE ITSELF		
			Were they any sweeter my early years? *I can only snare small memories...* *a hill a pasture an angle of light* *but today these days my warm body child* *you bring with you a cascade of remember.*
	A CASCADE OF REMEMBER		
But still. It made me sad for art to lose her voice.			
			Sweet babe *companion of our common comrade comfort* *You are*
			you are my fondest everything. *In your body a capture of the fleeting renewal.*
	WHAT IS THIS MOTHERHOOD?		
		Only the risk of dark darkness ***yields growth.*** ***Unending birth and death*** ***within each life.***	
	HERE THEN **IS OUR GREAT UNEXPLORED HARLEM**		
		There are more whitecaps on the water ***and my sight not what it once was*** ***but a tender admission here*** ***in this place where one waits trustingly*** ***I stand in awe of embryonic truth***	*I stand in awe of embryonic truth*
		it speaks	*it speaks*
	I WILL ENDURE	***I will endure***	*I will endure*
			I have returned to report a conspiracy exists
			in the night *in the dark*
			a conspiracy to keep life alive.
			I return from the barest brush with the command *to release my soul* *while birthing another*
		I tell you a woman screams it is a birth	
			...our blood finally dividing.
			I return to report she's still there.
			The small and silent oldwoman *on the nightwatch in the nursery.*
			She smelled of milk.
			She carried my sweet bundle *in the night* *in the dark*
			in the conspiracy to keep life alive.
			Her hair grey
			Her back bent
			nudging close she taught in gesture *what can be found in no man's book*
		How to bring the child to suck.	*How to lead my child to sustenance & growth.*
	PRECIOUS CARGO		
		We birthed so many ***both living and dead*** ***brought their little bodies home.*** ***In an instant the spirit settles or it flees.*** ***We watch.*** ***We witness*** ***but it is beyond our control.***	
	GO DOWN TO THE WELL **TO THE DEEPEST WELL**		

Man One	Man Two	Woman Three
	This child this stab at life this torrent outburst...	
I will endure	I will endure	

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
			I have returned to report *there are angels of mercy* *here on the nightwatch in the nursery.* *The simply generous heart* *un noted.* *Un hearlded.* *Un spoken of* *here in this arena of reconciliation* *and forgiveness.* *Here in the conspiracy to keep life alive.* *I had but to look to witness.*
ABSORB THE DELICATE WONDER **SIMPLE CREATION ASTOUNDS**			*It takes my breath away.*
		We've birthed so many ***both living and dead*** ***often the branch could not root*** ***closed down in time.*** ***We watched weary*** ***as what could have been life fulfilled*** ***and bonded*** ***became in some a living death*** ***became in some absorbed*** ***in the blood of the absent father's fears.*** ***His upperhand. His weaponry.*** ***His refusal to perceive.*** ***Please don't die***	
		denying your miracle of being.	*No picture could capture you*
		As long as there is life	*my warmlifebloodbaby unfolding a child*
			Your change too rapid *your movements too fluid you...*
		hope survives intact	*both my barrier & my path* *but I remember*
THE EMBRYONIC TRUTH: **I WILL ENDURE**		***With each birth renewal*** ***The embryonic truth:*** ***I will endure***	*With each birth renewal* *The embryonic truth:* *I will endure*

Man One

The embryonic truth:
I will endure

Man Two

The embryonic truth:
I will endure

Woman Three

I WILL ENDURE
THIS GIFT AGE
LAYERS AND DEEPENS ALL THINGS
WHAT WE ARE BORN WITH WE CARRY.
IT RAMBLES
A RADIANT BRANCHING
CONVERGING WITH
AND JOINING
WHAT WE RECEIVE FROM LIFE—
EVEN THAT WE WISH TO BURY
BENEATH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
GROWS
FOLDING BACK INTO THIS MOMENT
ONTO THE WEALTHY
SUBSTANCE OF SELF
GRASPING HOW WE PERCEIVE
WHAT WE WILL ALLOW.
IT IS A TANGIBLE STRUGGLE
TO STAY OPEN.
SOME CHOICES MADE
AND MADE FOR US
WE MUST A LIFELONG DEFEND.
OVER AND AGAIN
JUSTIFY AND DENY.
BUT BEING PLANTS THE SEED
WE TEND THE FIELDS
HARVEST OUR HONEYED YIELD
BECOMING
HOW WE SPEND OUR TIME
FORGING EACH MOMENT A PERSON
ONE NOT BEFORE.

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
	HEAVEN'S OPEN A HEART SPEAKS	***Why should we stop now? When we've just begun to unravel our mysteries: the wheat from the stalk the gene from the helix. Our story the simple truth of it.***	
	WE ARE AN ANCIENT AND GROWING FORCE		
	SHE OF THE UNINTERRUPTED GAZE		*I've seen women who looked with a look that did not look down. A smile spread open and friendly upon her face.*
	LOOK AROUND LOOK AROUND		
	BECOME BECOMING	***Frontiers await the awake of earth from man's numbing...***	
	WHY THEY FEAR OUR FREEDOM	***Each a part of the same flower catch its bloom but can't keep us there.***	
	I AM AFRAID		*Wait!*

Man One

My house is burning.
My house is burning.

Man Two

Blessed felicity change is always
love's divine which has no object.

Woman Three

WE ARE WAKING
FROM OUR COLLECTIVE SLUMBER.
WE ARE STIRRING STARTLED COMING TO
FROM OUR COMPLICITOUS
SELF SACRIFICING SLEEP
GIVING OUR LIVES AWAY TO OTHERS...

LIKE THE BABE YET TO BE A CHILD
LIKE SOME THING FROM NO THING
WE ARE BIRTHING OURSELVES.
WOMEN ALLOWED WOMEN
FORCING THE CHOICE FOR CHANGE.
NEW GROWTH.
A RELEASE.
A CLEARING
FROM THE TANGLE OF THE OLD MODELS
SWALLOWED BY MEN AND CHILDREN
ALLOWING IT. SEEKING IT....

YOU CAN'T DAM UP OUR RIVER
ITS FORCE DISPERSED
WILL FIND ANOTHER COURSE.
WOMANHOOD IS CHANGING

A REVOLUTION OF MATTER
RIGHT BEFORE YOUR SIGHTLESS EYES
LOOK AROUND
LOOK AROUND.
WE ARE ALREADY DIFFERENT
THAN WE WERE BEFORE.
YOU CAN'T DAM UP OUR RIVER
FLOW FLOWING
WE ARE TRANSFORMING
MOVING ON FROM THESE TEARFUL
AND PAINFUL ADIEUS....
BUT FOR YOURSELF
LOOK AROUND.

WE ARE MANY.
WE ARE VARIOUS
DIFFERENT AND MULTIPLE.
WE CAN NEVER AGAIN BE COLLAPSED
INTO THE ONEANDONLY WOMAN.
TOO MUCH FLOW OVERFLOWING
FOR THAT NOW...
DON"T BE FOOLED, LOOK AROUND.

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
			Wait. *I am afraid of this place* *with no known shelter.* *No protection.* *We rest still in hibernation* *still in the not dead night so dark.* *A wasteland alone & bitter.* *Caught and cornered by the what is* *having lost my early faith* *in the power of dreams&visions...*
		...convinced in fact ***that fantasy is a danger...***	
			...I wonder. *How can we imagine and give form* *to the day which is not yet?*
	SHE CRIED		
	BECAUSE WE'VE ALWAYS KNOWN	***Take comfort in the comfort of mothers.*** ***Because we've always known*** ***That swelling flood will carry you*** ***will carry all*** ***those bestowed with grace*** ***and those*** ***many more who've come before*** ***mutilated*** ***odd contortions*** ***consumption and hatred*** ***that breeds in the soul of being*** ***other than one's being*** ***that is*** ***being in this culture's womanform.***	*Because we've always known*
	THERE IS NO RHYME OR REASON TO IT **FREEWOMEN** **IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH FASHION** **FREEDWOMEN**		
	I AM AFRAID		*Wait.*
	CAN YOU LOOK WITHOUT LIES **AT A LYING WORLD?**		*Am I strong enough to look with such clarity?* *Isn't it plenty to continue birthing the life* *bearing the layer upon layer of new matter?*
		Bound impounded ***nailed to the cross*** ***of an ideology termed Womanhood.*** ***The strictest adherents*** ***we women ourselves...***	
			...can be most cruel too...
		Complicitous women ***selfoppressors we run*** ***drive*** ***course*** ***our love our talents*** ***our very life through others*** ***never keeping for our journey*** ***rather disposing as waste*** ***any unabsorbed, undemanded*** ***substance of self*** ***and all the while we cry...***	
	'TISN'T SO! 'TISN'T SO!	***'tisn't so! 'tisn't so!***	*'tisn't so! 'tisn't so!*

Man One	Man Two	Woman Three
		SALUTE OUR SURVIVAL
		IT'S A DEEP BLIND WELL OF GRACE. ***BRING YOUR SEASON*** ***ROUND TO REST WHERE IT BELONGS.***
Because we've always known	Because we've always known	***BECAUSE WE'VE ALWAYS KNOWN***
	...that is being in this culture...	
Historic palatte red. **Do you think** **it would have been any different** **if women had treasured the power?**		
		'TISN'T SO! 'TISN'T SO!

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
		Remember. ***The master is not god.*** ***He is simply an other among others.***	
	SHE BOUGHT UPON **HER FATHER'S REQUEST** **A WHITE SILK SHIRT IN ITALY** **HE DIED BEFORE** **SHE COULD COME HOME** **SO SHE PUT IT ON** **HIS DRY DEAD BODY** **AND PLACED HIM IN THE GROUND** **NOW SHE'S NO MAN'S DAUGHTER**	***Now she's no man's daughter.***	*Now she's no man's daughter.*
It is late, hot August. The foliage is the deep green that has the threat of death in it. The house gets hot and a dialogue developes betweeen the closing and opening of the doors and windows. I open them for air and to gaze at the yard. He closes them to guard against the prodigious bees, sycophantic intruders, and to prevent our child from wandering out. My impulse is to open. His is to close. I notice this closing then opening then closing has created a tension between us and I resentfully begin to attach a symbolism to his actions: the jailer, the warden, always placing boundaries, always defining and locking up.			*I become angry and want to break things.*
Today I perceive this dialogue differently. Perhaps today I am stronger. I can see that we each are constantly pushing for our positions and that this is of some natural order. We will probably never blend. He will always be closing and I always opening, but both tendencies are valid, both are needed to sustain our bond. I must simply be clear in my knowledge that I stand on an equal ground.	**STAND ON AN EQUAL GROUND**	***Our patience millenniums tested.*** ***We are grand enough*** ***to allow the difference.*** ***Can we begin an end*** ***to this long loneliness?***	*Can we bring our separated worlds together?* *My womanhood to some other malehood?* *Come to an understanding?*
	A PART OF THE SELF MUST DIE **TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE NEW**	***Can we bring a bond*** ***of mutual affection to fill that great hole*** ***left in the totalsoul*** ***That hysterical try to emulate*** ***an angry godthefather.***	*Leaving obedience and rotted anger* *in the hearts of women robbed.*
	YES. YES. A FINAL YES		
	WHAT IN THE WORLD **IS A MAN ANYWAY?**		
	HUMAN FIELDS OF WAVING GRAIN		

Man One

Man Two

Woman Three

NOW SHE'S NO MAN'S DAUGHTER

My fragmented boyhood
to your girlhood?

Come to an understanding?

OUR PATIENCE MILLENNIUMS TESTED.
WE ARE GRAND ENOUGH
TO ACCEPT DIFFERENCE.

All this talk talking just to see
that we be
simply a part of an unending fecundity.
What sort of answer is that?

Why are we here
if it's all random confusion and chaos
breeding bleeding birth and death
with no control?

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
WE ARE THE WITNESS. THE WATCHER THE ONES WHO BEHOLD			
			We carry we are the life.
TAKE A NOTE. SET IT DOWN UNCLENCH YOUR PAIN		***Take a note. Set it down. Unclench your pain.***	*Take a note. Set it down. Unclench your pain.*
(Break. Song.)		***Let us move on before we despair of reaching a peaceful shore. Cross over into a new time a time other birthed from but unlike all previous time.***	
			Pass by the scene of the devastated victim.
MY SWELLING FLOOD		***...trespass upon that tender promised land?***	
PASS THE MESSAGE HEART TO HEART LIFE'S FIRST SIGNAL FROM WITHIN THE WOMB			
WE WILL SPEAK		***We will speak.***	*We will speak.*
WELCOME LITTLE LIFE			*Have you ever noticed the spirit startled eyes of the newlyborn? Before the layers of being. Before they've become accustomed to this fleshly form? They've not quite arrived not quite joined our short stay upon this tranquil orb of eden placed within an exploding & violent universe.*

Man One

No moral mission.
No righteous claim.
No judgement.
Then who is this what that we are?

Man Two

We carry
we are the life.

Take a note. Set it down.
Unclench your pain.
I must find and uncover
the living and loving father.
He who is beyond separation and absence.

We will speak.

Woman Three

BEHOLD CREATION
SPLENDOROUS CREATION
AND YET TOO
WE CARRY WE ARE IT SAME SAME
THAT LIFE THAT TREASURED BEING
THAT PULSING PULSES THROUGH US
OUR SELVES & OUR ANCHORED PAST
NOW EVOLVES A STRONGER URGE
TRANSFORMED THROUGH ACT
AND CONSCIOUS WILL
THAT MOVES A PEOPLE
TO CHOSE
TO LIVE ANOTHER WAY

WE THE STREAM RUNNING UPSTREAM
THE FORCE OF UNKNOWN SOURCE
ENDLESSLY RECURRENT
SPINNING SPRING COMES AGAIN...
TAKE A NOTE. SET IT DOWN
UNCLENCH YOUR PAIN

CAN YOU COMPANY US
TO OCCUPY THE THRESHOLD?

...OUT HERE AT THE LAST OF THE LAND
WITHOUT WATER'S EMBRACE...

ALTHOUGH THE HORIZON OF
UNDERSTANDING
IS YET MILES DISTANT
YOUR WAIT IS OVER.
YOU UNCOUNTED BEINGS OF SILENCE.
YOU WHO ARE THE BURIED TRUTH
BENEATH MEN'S LIVES.
WE THE FRUIT OF YOUR LABOR
WILL NOT BETRAY YOU.
WE WILL SPEAK

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
	THIS MUST BE PARADISE THIS PLANET OUR EARTH		*The body infused with spirit's breath* *alive & human* *but not quite human* *This fruit of union* *this one from two how simple* *how matter from no matter* *their eyes still a kin of another place not here.* *If we could only see again* *with those spirit startled eyes* *as the ones who do not yet name all things.*
	HUMAN SOUL MIRACULOUS GIFT		
	OUR SPECIES OUR BRILLIANT BLUE LABOR OF LOVE		
		As your river ages ***it widens & carries more...***	
		Can you hear the roar ***the many voiced*** ***low and rumbling roar?*** ***It speaks a language as yet unfamiliar*** ***from that peaceful distant shore***	
	(Chorus one) **A HEATGLOW OF FLUSHING WILDFLOWER IN FULLBLOOM**		
		of a meaning still lived ***indistinctly heard***	
	(Chorus two) **FLARE BUSH BRANCH AND SPROUTING OUT**		
		from a cup overfloweth	
	(Chorus three) **SOME COME UP WHILE OTHERS RECEDE**		
			budding germination around the roundworld
		carrying the flow of the force of a life ***used and damed up but now...***	
	BECAUSE WE'VE ALWAYS KNOWN		*Timid & tender equality negotiates a path.*
		Division of the world our greatest sin	
	THE SPIRIT'S RETURN THE BODY'S FINAL REST		
			Admit and accept our mothers' pain *and chisel ourselves from it...*
	BECAUSE WE ARE OF HER		

Man One | **Man Two** | **Woman Three**

WE NOW WALKING UPRIGHT
WE WILL GIVE UP NO THING
WE WILL LEAVE BEHIND NO ONE.
WE WALKING UPRIGHT
OVER
INTO THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW
WHERE THERE ARE QUESTIONS
WITH NO ANSWERS
EXCEPT WITHIN THE SINGLE SOUL.
WE
STRANDED HERE
WHERE THE PATH DIVIDES
HERE AT THIS DIFFICULT PLACE
THIS FOREST OF THORNS
THIS LAND IN DROUGHT.

Adrift without set context
without place
often with no known relation
Mere objects recoiling off one another
lost in search of our place of origin...

...lost in search of the living and loving father.

Timid & tender equality negotiates a path.

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
			I lay with my child *and listen to the breathing becoming steady* *It's the clue to sleep' s release* *when I am again a single being.* *How much its sound recalls* *the waves upon the shore.*
	IN AND OUT IN AND OUT (Chorus one) **ALWAYS AND A LIFETIME** (All chorus) **IN AND OUT** **IN AND OUT** **IN AND OUT** **ALWAYS AND A LIFETIME** **IN AND OUT** **IN AND OUT** **ALWAYS AND A LIFETIME** **IN AND OUT** **IN AND OUT** **ALWAYS AND A LIFETIME** **IN AND OUT** **IN AND OUT** **ALWAYS AND A LIFETIME** **IN AND OUT** **IN AND OUT** **ALWAYS AND A LIFETIME**		
	GLIMPSE LUCIDITY **AT THE LIMITS OF HUMANITY**		
			As I age *bits of my mother come to surface in me.*
		The world and us in it ***a network of relation.***	
	ENCOURAGE THE FIRE		
	STRONGSHAME		
	AND YOURS THOSE YET TO COME		
		It all can't be known and named ***futile mission of man.***	

Man One

You'll regret this betrayal. Castout.

Remember my name my deeds.

Man Two

This is truth true despite our denials
our glorified individuality.

It's a relief to think we're not so unique
to shed our burden our obsession with self
    our only balance to death.

To think of the generations of humans in me
    all given their part and parcel.
A mysterious genetic ghost
    passing on until this "I"
    their life mine....

Woman Three

WHITE WAVES EDGE
AT THE END OF UNCOVERED LAND
BEYOND THE WATER'S EMBRACE.
EACH SUCCESSIVE LAP LAPPING
ROLLING WATER WAVE FLOWING
ONE PUSHES OUT AND SWALLOWS
WHILE ANOTHER RECEDES.
ALL FLOODING FORMED
FROM THE ETERNAL SEA SOURCE
PULLED BY GRAVITY
THE TUGGING SUN&MOON.
CREATION.
WITHIN AND SURROUNDING
MUCH AS LIFE GIVES AFTER LIFE
HUMAN GENESIS
A FOUNTAIN OF GENERATION
WITHOUT SINGLE SOURCE.
A ROLLING LAPPING
OF WAVES OF PEOPLES
FLOWING ONES INTO OTHERS

SOME PUSHING FORWARD
WHILE OTHERS RECEDE.

WE'RE ALL OF A PIECE
OUR BLOOD A GREAT GANGES SHARED.
FLUID WATER
BREATH OF LIFE
BELONGING TO ALL A TOTAL SOUL
ELUSIVE MEANING UNNAMED NAMELESS
THAT WHICH ESCAPES
A UNIVERSE OF MATTER MIXING LINKED
IMPLODING EXPLODING
FORM AND REFORM
SOME COME FORWARD
WHILE OTHERS RECEDE.

Narrator **Chorus** **Woman One** **Woman Two**

IF WE COULD ONLY SEE AGAIN...

Like the newlyborn's startled eyes

some fragment
belongs beyond our bodies.
Creation within and surrounding.

And now at last, we're near complete. Having spoken ourselves out....

Well...I'll tell of one last talk with a friend.
We were speaking of Feminism and he thought it taught losing time, or rather catching it by losing it, so that each moment you are absorbed in life, forced to let go of what does not matter and feel one another chosing a life in touch with time, with the spirit, acknowledging the desires of self. And it would be through this living in touch with time and work that new matter could evolve, new forms of civilized life.

Beseiged with doubt
Knowing I can not devote myself
solely to the practice of writing
as may be required to create meaningful work.
Confused with a lack of confidence
in my abilities
my fears tonight overwhelm and consume me.

OVERWHELM AND CONSUME ME

I am not living
I will not live the life of the passionate creatress
I dreamed of as a girl....

WHEN WILL YOU STOP MOURNING HER?

...that dream had no in fact.
Nor any real model.
That dream did not include
the oblivion which is our motherhood.
That dream did not recognize the hard,
anonymous work of collective change.
That was not a dream aware
of the worry that festers over money
dulling and robbing the inspired spark.
For strength I think of those recent few
I know through their work

KOLLWITZ. BECKER.
RICH. SPERRO. WALKER.

and all the many others
with no name familiar to me
Artists who are mothers.
Women for whom watching
the child's living expression
of the beauty of creation
is not enough.

CUP OVERFLOWETH

and knowing for me
it isn't enough only to birth and raise the children
and it isn't enough only to write.

I MUST HAVE BOTH

I must have both.

I must have both.

I said "I agree", having to add that living into a new form of life is a difficult business because it asks a great deal of a person while not offering any promise of eventual arrival, no completion. This leaves each of us in doubt, alone with our mortality, kept company only in some undefinable sense that all humans share, that is that we are human.
Which might be a comfort if we were not so divided and afraid.

Man One	Man Two	Woman Three
I'm not done yet.		
	I must have both.	***I MUST HAVE BOTH***
		WITHIN THE BODY OF A SINGLE BEING ALL RESIDES AND INTERMINGLES. ALL EVOLVES AND IN BECOMING BECOMES MORE INTRICATE COMPLICATED. LESS CLEAR. LESS SIMPLE.

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
	NOW THERE'S YOUR GOD. WEAVE IT IN		
		...a part must die to make room for the new.	
	ACCEPT WHAT IS GIVEN		
	BECAUSE WE'VE ALWAYS KNOWN		
		Forgiveness gives a form of grace love awakes and so does life spreading open to disclose and reveal compassion...	
...compassion. It smells sweet a hunch perhaps out of season but it will take compassion that active property thrusting forward to make peace between to heal the mean parts of us. Active, willful compassion. Comes in heat. But darkness surrounds the seed of germination. & The fetal chamber has no sun.			
	IT HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN AS IT IS NOW		
			I dreamed we lived another way of living.
			We gave each other that greatgift love that strongarm of life healing and restorative generations spreading forward & back.
	EARTH'S LIFE GOD'S DELTA		

Man One

Man Two

Woman Three

AND YET THE ECHO
MOMMIEDADDYBROTHERME
FLOWS FROM SELF TO OTHER
DRAWS UPON THE RANGE AND SCOPE
OF THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE
GENETIC HOST.
UNASSESSIBLE ACCIDENTS
COUNTLESS FATES
BRINGING BEING TO THE SOUL
EACH MOMENT
YET THE BEAUTY OF THE BEAST
IS THE GENE'S RELENTLESS PERFECTION.

Because we've always known...

BECAUSE WE'VE ALWAYS KNOWN
LOVE AWAKES AND SO DOES LIFE.
THAT SCATTERED SEED
BROUGHT HOME INTO THE FREELAND
PRECIOUS JEWEL OF FRIENDSHIP
ONE NOT IN BONDAGE
ONE WHO STAYS OF HER FREE WILL.

I dreamed we died another way of dying.

A DIFFICULT BIRTH
IS SOMETIMES A DEATH
BUT THIS STURDY SNAKE OF LIFE
CURLS ROUND
CURLS ROUND.
ALL EMBRACING AND UNENDING
ETERNAL AND EXCLUDING NO ONE.
I KNOW IT COULD BE ANOTHER WAY.

We gave each other that greatgift love
that strongarm of life
healing and restorative
generations spreading forward & back.

THIS ROBUST
AND STURDY SNAKE OF LIFE
COMES ROUND
COMES ROUND WHOLE
AS A BABE'S PERFECT SUBSTANCE
CYCLE BACK AND BE REMIXED
OUR SPECIES' FLOODING FLOW.

IT IS A SOFT SADNESS THESE DAYS
THIS TROUBLED TIME OF CHANGE
WHEN WE TRY TO LIVE INTO THE VOID
INTO A WAY NOT YET LIVED.
THIS ART OF NEW SIGHT
NOT AN EASY VOICE TO HEAR
THE TONGUE IS THICK
LEFT IN THE GROUND
GENERATIONS FALLOW
IT STILL MIGHT NOT SPROUT TO SPEAK.

Narrator	Chorus	Woman One	Woman Two
		We water and tend	
		fertilize and teach	
		and yet the sounds remain a murmur.	
		The shape indistinct and distant.	
		Elusive.	
			Is it a dream?
			Dreamed by the weak
			unable to overcome the forgetting
			that is oppression?
			Unable to bear a pain too sharp?
	OUR ONLY POWER TO SAY NO		
		Look beyond where we've arrived	
		We the great granddaughters	
		of the destroyers of the books	
		the memories of others	
	BEAR AND FORGIVE A PAIN TOO SHARP		
		Don't be fooled multiplicity's a strength	
	THE MANY VOICED ROAR		
	IN THE CONSPIRACY TO KEEP LIFE ALIVE	***difference the password***	
		The air laden	
		with the cloud of forgiving forgiveness	
		this day of miracles	
		this creating the soul each moment.	
	SPIRIT STARTLED EYES		
	STEER THE SHIP		
	YES SET THE SWEET HEART FREE		
			Blast of light your life shines into our lives
			a reminder of the golden joy
	ENCOURAGE THE FIRE		
		Willfull bloom blossoming	
	WE THE LIFE	***We the life.***	*We the life.*

Man One	Man Two	Woman Three
		I DO NOT ***WE CAN NOT KNOW THIS*** ***BECAUSE IT IS NOT YET.*** ***BUT LOOK BEYOND...***
	Look beyond this time of infamy this cycle of authority enthroned commanding and insistent.	
		SALVATION LIKE CREATION ***A CONTINUUM*** ***LOOK BEYOND AND FAITH*** ***ALL YOU WHO WORK AND WAIT.*** ***JOY'S INCLUSIVE*** ***COMES CLOSE TO PRAYER*** ***HOPE'S A SWEETER FIND IN THIS FACE*** ***ITS SCARCITY POTENT & DISTILLED.*** ***THIS FACE UNFAMILIAR*** ***SO AS TO BE*** ***IT COULD BE MISTAKEN.*** ***TENDER ALLOWANCE*** ***ACCEPTING DIFFERENCE***
		CROSSING OVER WE THE BEHOLDERS ***HUMAN SEASONS TOO*** ***TURN IN A BLAZE OF COLORED GLORY*** ***SO DON'T DESPAIR*** ***OF REACHING THAT PEACEFUL SHORE.*** ***TIMID AND TENDER EQUALITY*** ***NEGOTIATES A PATH.*** ***THE REDEEMING PARADISE*** ***OF TIMID AND TENDER EQUALITY*** ***WITH THE FORGIVENESS OF CHILDREN.***
	Knowing we walk upon the already	
We the life.	We the life.	***WE THE STREAM RUNNING UPSTREAM*** ***WE THE LIFE***